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Aggravation OF SINNE: *AND* SINNING

Against { *KNOWLEDGE.* *MERCIE.*

Delivered in ſeverall Sermons upon divers occaſions.

BY

THO: GOODVVIN. *B. D.*

LONDON,
Printed by *M. F.* for *I. Rothwell*, and are to be ſold at the ſigne of the Sun in *Pauls* Churchyard. 1638.

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An Explanation

OF

SIN.

BY

THO. GOODWIN, B.D.

LONDON,

Printed by M. F. for John Rothwell,
and are to be sold at the Sign of the
Sun in Pauls-Church-yard. 1656.

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AGGRA-

AGGRAVATION OF *SINNE.*

ROM. 7. 13.

Was that then which is good made death unto mee? God forbid. But ſin, that it might appeare ſin, working death in me by that which is good: that ſin by the commandement might become exceeding ſinfull.

WEE finde our Apoſtle in the 9. verſe to have beenalive, but ſtruck upon the ſudden *dead*,

by an apparition preſented to him in the glaſſe of the law, *of the ſinfulneſſe of ſinne. Sin revived*, ſayes the 9. ver. *appeared to be ſin*, ſayes the 13. verſe, lookes but like it ſelfe, *above meaſure ſinfull*: and he falls downe dead at the very ſight of it: *I dyed*, ſayes he in the 9. *it wrought death in me*, ſayes the 13. that is, an apprehenſion of death and hell, as due to that eſtate I was then in. But yet as the life of ſin was the death of *Paul*, ſo this death of his was but a preparation to a new life, *I through the Law am dead to the Law, that I might live to God, Gal.* 2. 19. and here hee likewiſe ſpeakes of Gods worke upon him at his firſt *converſion*; for then it was that he relates how ſinne became

came in his eſteeme, ſo *above meaſure ſinfull.*

The ſubject then to be inſiſted on is the ſinfulneſſe of ſinne, a ſubject therefore as neceſſary as any other, becauſe if ever we be ſaved, ſin muſt firſt appeare to us all, as it did here to him, *above meaſure ſinfull.*

The ſubject is the ſinfulneſſe of ſin.

And firſt, becauſe all knowledge begins at the effects which are obvious to ſenſe, and interpreters of the nature of things, therefore we will begin this *Demonſtration* of the evill of ſinne, from the miſchievous effects it hath filled the world withall, it having done nothing but wrought miſchiefe ſince it came into the world, and all the miſchiefe that hath beene done, it alone hath

Miſchievous effects of ſin

done, but eſpecially towards the poore ſoule of man, the miſerable ſubject of it.

1 Effect, it debaſeth the ſoule.

Which firſt it hath debaſed the ſoule of man, the nobleſt creature under heaven, and higheſt allyed, made to be a companion fit for God himſelfe, but ſin hath ſtript it of its firſt native *excellency*, as it did *Reuben*, *Gen.* 49.41. debaſed the ſoul more worth than all the world, as Chriſt himſelfe ſaith, that onely went to the price of it: yet ſin hath made it a drudge and ſlave to every creature it was made to rule: therefore the *Prodigall* as a type is ſaid to *ſerve ſwine*, and *feed on huskes*, ſo as every vanity maſters it. Therefore wee finde in Scripture, that men are ſaid to bee *ſervants*

to wine, *Tit.* 2. 3. ſervants to riches, and divers luſts, &c.

And hence it is that *ſhame* attends upon it, *Rom.* 6. 21. Now ſhame ariſeth out of an apprehenſion of ſome excellency debaſed: and by how much the excellency is greater, by ſo much is the ſhame the greater, and therefore unutterable confuſion will one day befall ſinners: becauſe ſinne is the debaſement of an unvaluable excellency.

2. Effect, it defiles the ſoule.

Secondly, it not onely debaſeth it, but defiles it alſo; and indeed there was nothing elſe that could *defile it*, *Mat.* 15. 20. for the ſoule is a moſt pure beame, bearing the Image of the *Father of lights*: as farre ſurpaſſing

the ſunne in pureneſſe, as the ſunne doth a clod of earth; and yet all the dirt in the world cannot defile the ſun; all the clouds that ſeeke to muffle it, it ſcatters them all: but ſin hath defiled the ſoule, yea, *one* ſin, the leaſt defiles it, in an *inſtant*, *totally*, *eternally*.

Firſt, one ſin did it in the fall of *Adam*, *Rom.* 5. 17. *one offence* polluted him, and all the world. Now ſuppoſe you ſhould ſee one drop of darkneſſe ſeazing on the ſun, and putting out that light and eye of heaven, and to looſen it out of the orbe it moves in, and cauſe it to drop downe a lump of darkneſs, you would ſay it were a ſtrange darkneſſe: this ſin did then in the ſoule, to which yet the ſunne

is

is but as a Taper.

Secondly, it defiles it thus *in an inſtant*. Take the moſt glorious Angell in heaven, and let one of the leaſt ſinnes ſeaze upon his heart, hee would in an inſtant fall down from heaven, ſtript of all his glory, the uglieſt creature that ever was beheld: you would count that the ſtrongeſt of all poyſons, that would poyſon in an inſtant; as *Nero* boiled a poyſon to that height, that it killed *Germanicus* as ſoone as he received it; now ſuch an one is ſin. In an inſtant.

Thirdly, ſin defiles it *totally*: it reſts not in one member onely, but beginning at the underſtanding, eates into the will and affections, ſoaks through all. Thoſe diſeaſes we account ſtrongeſt, which Totally.

ſeaze not on a joynt or a member onely, but ſtrikes rottenneſſe through the whole body.

Eternally. Fourthly, it defiles *eternally*, it being *æterna macula*, a ſtaine which *no nitre or ſope*, or any creature can *waſh out*, *Ier.2.21.* There was once let in a deluge of water, and the world was all over-flowed with it; it waſhed away ſinners indeed, but not one ſin. And the world ſhall bee a fire againe at the latter day, and all that fire, and thoſe flames in hell that follow, ſhall not purge out one ſinne.

3. Effect, it robs the ſoule of Gods Image. Thirdly, it hath robbed the ſoule of the *Image of God*, deprived *us of the glory of God*, *Rom.3.23.* the Image of Gods holineſſe, which is his beauty

beauty and ours: wee were beautifull and all glorious once within, which though but an accident, is more worth than all mens ſoules devoid of it, it being a likeneſſe unto God, *a divine nature*, without which no man ſhall ſee God. Though man in innocency had all perfections united in him *via eminentiæ*, that are to be found in other creatures, yet this was more worth than all: for all the reſt made him not like to God, as this did; without which all Paradiſe could not make *Adam* happy; which when hee had loſt, hee was left *naked*, though thoſe his other perfections remained with him; which is *profitable for all things*, as the Apoſtle ſayes.

The leaſt dramme of which, the whole world emballanced with, would bee found too light; without which the glorious Angels would be damned devils, the Saints in heaven damned ghoſts, this it hath robbed man of.

4. Effect, It robs a man of God himſelfe.

Fourthly, it hath robbed man even of God himſelfe: *Your ſinnes ſeparate* (ſayes God) *betwixt you and me*: and therefore they are ſaid to *live without God in the world*: and in robbing a man of God, it robs him of all things; for *all things are ours*, but ſo far as *God is ours*; of God, whoſe face makes heaven, he is all in all; *his loving kindneſſe is better than life*, and containeth beauty, honors, riches, all: yea they are but a drop to him.

But

But its miſchiefe hath not ſtaid here, but as the *Leproſie of the Lepers* in the old Law, ſometimes infected their houſes, garments; ſo it hath hurld confuſion over all the world, brought *a vanity* on the *creature*, *Rom.*8.23. and *a curſe*: and had not Chriſt undertooke the ſhattered condition of the world to uphold it, it had fallen about *Adams* eares. Gen.2. Heb.1.2.

And though the old walls and ruinous palace of the world ſtands to this day, yet the beauty, the gloſſe, and glory of the hangings is ſoyled and marred with many imperfections caſt upon every creature.

But as the houſe of the Leper was to be pulled downe, and Traitors houſes uſe

uſe to be made jakes : ſo the world (if Chriſt had not ſtept in) had ſhrunke into its firſt nothing : and you will ſay, that is a ſtrong carrion that retaines not onely infection in it ſelfe, but infects all the ayre about : ſo this, that not the ſoule the ſubject of it only, but all the world.

Laſtly, it was the first founder of hell.

Laſtly, it was the firſt founder of hell, and laid the firſt corner ſtone thereof: ſin alone brought in and filled that bottomleſſe gulfe with all the fire, and brimſtome, and treaſures of wrath which ſhall never bee burnt and conſumed. And this crucified & pierced Chriſt himſelfe, poured on him his Fathers wrath, the enduring of which for ſinne, was ſuch, as

as that all the Angels in heaven had crackt and ſunke under it.

But yet this eſtimate is but taken from the effects of it; the eſſence of it, which is the cauſe of all theſe evils, muſt needs have much more miſchiefe in it. Shall I ſpeak the leaſt evill I can ſay of it? *It containes all evils elſe in it*: therefore, *Iames* 1. 23. the Apoſtle calls it *filthineſſe, and abundance of ſuperfluity*, or excrement as it were, of naughtineſſe. περισσεια κακιας. As if ſo tranſcendent, that if all evils were to have an excrement, a ſcumme, a ſuperfluity, ſinne is it, as being the abſtracted quinteſſence of all evill. An evill, which in the nature and eſſence of it *virtually*, and

Eſſence of ſinne the cauſe of all theſe evils.

and *eminently*, containes all evils of what kinde ſoever that are in the world; Inſomuch as in the Scriptures you ſhall finde that all the evils in the world, ſerve but to anſwer for it, and to give names to it. Hence ſin it is called *poyſon*, and ſinners *ſerpents*: ſin is called *a vomit*, ſinners *dogs*: ſin the ſtench of graves, and they *rotten ſepulchres*: ſinne *mire*, ſinners *ſowes*: and ſin *darkneſſe*, *blindneſſe*, *ſhame*, *nakedneſſe*, *folly*, *madneſſe*, *death*, whatſoever is filthy, defective, infective, painfull. Now as the holy Ghoſt ſayes of *Nabal*, *as is his name, ſo is he*; ſo may we ſay of ſin: for if *Adam* gave names to all things, according to their nature, much more God, *who cals things*

as

as they are. Surely God would not ſlander ſinne, though it bee his onely enemy. And beſides, there is reaſon for this, for it is the cauſe of all evils. God ſowed nothing but good ſeed in the world; *Hee beheld, and ſaw all things were very good.* It is ſin hath ſowne the tares: all thoſe evils that have come up, ſorrowes and diſeaſes, both unto men and beaſts. Now whatſoever is in the effect, is *via eminentiæ* in the cauſe. Surely therefore it is to the ſoule of man (the miſerable veſſell and ſubject of it) all that, which poyſon, death, and ſickneſſe is unto the other creatures, and to the body; and in that, it is all theſe to the *ſoule*, it is therefore more than all theſe to

Sin the cauſe of ſorowes & diſeaſes, &c

to it: for *corruptio optimi peſſima*: by how much the ſoul exceeds all other creatures, by ſo much muſt ſinne, which is the corruption, poyſon, death, and ſickneſſe of it, exceed all other evils.

But yet this is the leaſt ill that can be ſaid of it. There is 2. ſome further tranſcendent peculiar miſchiefe in it, that is not to be found in all other evils, as will appeare in many inſtances.

Some peculiar miſchiefe in ſinne not found in other evils.

For firſt, all other evils God proclaimes himſelf the author of, and ownes them all; though ſinne be the meritorious cauſe of all, yet God the efficient and diſpoſing cauſe. *There is no evill in the City but I have done it.* He onely diſclaimeth this, *Iames* 1. 13. as a baſtard of

1. God the author of other evils, not of ſinne.

ſome

ſome others breeding, for *hee is the Father of lights, ver.* 17.

Secondly, the utmoſt extremity of the evill of puniſhment God the Sonne under-went, had a cup mingled him of his Father, more bitter than if all the evils in the world had beene ſtrained in, and he dranke it off heartily to the bottome; but not a drop of ſinne, though ſweetned with the offer of all the world, would go downe with him.

2. Chriſt dranke a bitter cup of the evill of puniſhment, not of ſin.

Thirdly, other evils the Saints have choſen and embraced as good, and refuſed the greateſt good things the world had, as evill, when they came in competition with ſin. So *Moſes choſe rather to ſuffer, much rather than*

3. Other evils the Saints have choſen as good, but refuſed good things as evill, rather than to ſin.

than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin, *Heb.* 11. from 24. to 28. So *Chryſoſtome*, when *Eudoxia* the Empreſſe threatned him: goe tell her, ſayes hee, *Nil niſi peccatum timeo*, I feare nothing but ſin.

4. If ſinne were ſeparated from the devill he would be an amiable creature again.

Fourthly, take the devill himſelfe, whom you all conceive to be more full of miſchiefe than all the evils in the world, called therefore in the abſtract *ſpirituall wickedneſſe*, *Epheſ.* 6. 12. yet it was but ſin that firſt ſpoiled him, and it is ſin *poſſeſſeth* the very devils: he was a glorious Angell, till hee was acquainted with it: and could there bee a ſeparation made betweene him and ſin, hee would be againe of as good, ſweet, and amiable a nature, as any creature in earth or heaven.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Though other things are evill, yet nothing makes the creature *accurſed* but ſin: as all good things in the world doe not make a man a bleſſed man, ſo nor all the evils accurſed. God ſayes not, bleſſed are the honourable, and the rich, nor that accurſed are the poore: but *curſed is the man that continues not in all things*, *Gal.* 3. 10. a curſe to the leaſt ſinne; and on the contrary, *bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquities are forgiven, &c. Rom.* 4. 7.

5. Sin only makes the creature accurſed.

Sixthly, God hates nothing but ſin. Were all evils ſwept downe into one man, God hates him not ſimply for them, not becauſe thou art poore and diſgraced, but only becauſe ſinfull. It is ſinne he hates, *Rev.* 2. 15. *Eſa.* 27.

6. God hates nothing but ſin.

*Eſa.*27. 11. yea it alone: and whereas other attributes are diverſly communicated in their effects to ſeverall things: as his love and goodneſſe, Himſelfe, his Sonne, his children, have all a ſhare in: yet all the hatred (which is as large as his love) is ſolely poured out upon, and wholly, and limited only unto ſin.

Queſt. All the queſtion will bee what tranſcendency of evill is in the eſſence of it, that makes it above all other evils, and hated, and it onely by God, Chriſt, the Saints, &c. more than any other evill.

Anſw. Why? It is *enmity with God*, *Rom.* 8. 7. abſtracts wee know ſpeake eſſences: the meaning is, it is as directly con-

contrary to God, as any thing could be: for contrary it is to God, and all that is his.

As 1. contrary to his eſſence, to his exiſtence, and being God: for it makes men hate him, *Rom.* 1. 30. and *as he that hateth his brother is a murtherer*, 1 *Iohn* 3. 15. ſo he that hateth God may be ſaid to bee a murtherer of him, and wiſheth that hee were not. *Peccatum eſt Dei-cidium.*

Sin contrary to Gods eſſence.

2. Contrary it is to all his attributes, which are his *name*: men are jealous of their names: Gods name is himſelfe; as 1. It makes a man ſlight Gods goodneſſe, and to ſeeke happineſſe in the creature, as if hee were able to bee happy without him. And 2. it depoſeth his ſoveraignty, and ſets up other

2. Contrary to his attributes.

other gods before his face. 3. It contemns his truth, power, and juſtice. And 4. Turnes his grace into wantonneſſe.

So to what ever is his.

And as to himſelfe, ſo to what ever is his, or deare to him. Beſides, A King hath 3. things in an eſpeciall manner deare to him: *His Lawes, His favourites, His image ſtampt upon his coine*: and ſo hath God.

1. Contrary to his Lawes.

Firſt, his lawes & ordinances: God never gave law, but it hath been broken by ſin; ἀνομία is the definition of it, *The Tranſgreſſion of the Law*, 1 *Ioh.* 3.4. yea it is called deſtroying the law, *Pſ.* 119.126 And know, that Gods Law, the leaſt tittle of it, is more deare to him, than all the world. For ere the leaſt tittle of it ſhall be broken, hea-

ven

ven and earth ſhall paſſe. The leaſt ſin therefore, which is a breach of the leaſt Law, is worſe than the deſtruction of the world: and for his worſhip, (as envying God ſhould have any,) it turnes his ordinances into ſin.

2. Contrary to his favourites.

Secondly, for his favourites: God hath but a few poore ones; upon whom becauſe God hath ſet his love, ſin hath ſet its hatred.

3. Againſt his Image in mans breaſt.

Laſtly, for his image even in a mans owne breaſt: the law of the members fights againſt the law of the minde, and endeavoureth to expell it, though a man ſhould bee damned for it. *Gal.* 5. 17: *The fleſh* (namely ſin) *luſteth againſt the Spirit*, for they are contraries. Contrary indeed; for mee thinkes though it hates

hates that Image in others, that yet it ſhould ſpare it in a mans ſelfe, out of ſelf-love; but yet, though a man ſhould be damned, if this Image be expelled, it yet laboureth to doe this; ſo deadly is that hatred, a man hates himſelfe, as holy, ſo farre as he is ſinfull.

It abounds now ſo high, as our thoughts can follow it no farther: *Divines* ſay, it aſpires unto infinity, the object againſt whom it is thus contrary unto, being God, who is infinite, they tell us, that objectively, ſinne it ſelfe is infinite. Sure I am, the worth of the object or party offended, aggravates the offence: an ill word againſt the King is high treaſon, not the greateſt indignity to another man.

man. Sure I alſo am, that God was ſo offended with it, as, though he loves his Son as himſelfe, yet he (though *without ſin*) being but *made ſin* by imputation, yet God *ſpared him not*: and becauſe the creatures couldnot ſtrike a ſtroke hard enough, hee himſelfe was *pleaſed to bruiſe him*, *Eſay* 53.16. *Hee ſpared not his owne Son*, *Rom.* 8.32. His love might have overcome him, to have paſſed by it to his Son; at leaſt a word of his mouth might have pacified him: yet ſo great was his hatred of it, and offence at it, as he powred the vials of his wrath on him: Neither would entreaty ſerve, for *though he cryed with ſtrong cryes it ſhould paſſe from him*, God would not, till

hee had out-wraſtled it.

Perſon God and man ſuffering aggravates ſin.

And as the perſon offended, aggravates the offence, as before, ſo alſo the perſon ſuffering, being God and man, argues the abounding ſinfulneſſe of it. For, for what crime did you ever heare a King was put to death? their perſons being eſteemed in worth above all crime, as civill. Chriſt was the *King of Kings*.

The leaſt ſin virtually more or leſſe containes all ſin in the nature of it.

And yet there is one conſideration more to make the meaſure of its iniquity fully full, and to abound in flowing over, and that is this, that the leaſt ſinne virtually more or leſſe containes all ſinne in the nature of it (I meane not that all are equall, therefore I adde, more or leſſe) and I prove it thus: becauſe

becauſe *Adam* by one offence contracted the ſtaine of all; no ſooner did one ſinne ſeaze upon his heart, but hee had all ſinnes in him.

And ſo every ſinne in us by a miraculous multiplication inclines our nature more to every ſinne than it was before: it makes the pollution of nature of a deeper dy; not only to that ſpecies of ſinne, whereof it is the proper individuall act, but to all elſe: as bring one candle into a roome, the light ſpreads all over; and then another, the light is all over more increaſed: So it is in ſinne; for the leaſt cuts the ſoule off from God, and then it is ready to goe a whoring after every vanity that will

Every ſin inclines our nature more to ſin.

entice it, or entertaine it.

Sin containes not only all other evils in it, but alſo all of its owne kinde.

And this ſhewes the fulneſſe of the evill of it, in that it containes not onely all other evils in the world in it, but alſo all of its own kinde. As you would count that a ſtrange poyſon, the leaſt drop of which containes the force of all poyſon in it: That a ſtrange diſeaſe, the leaſt infection whereof brought the body ſubject to all diſeaſes: yet ſuch an one is ſin, the leaſt making the ſoule more prone and ſubject to all.

Sin a perfect evill.

And now you ſee it is a perfect evill; and though indeed it cannot be ſaid to bee the chiefeſt in that full ſenſe wherein God is ſaid to be the chiefeſt good; becauſe if it were as bad as God is good, how

how could he pardon it, ſubdue it, bring it to nothing as he doth? and then how could it have addition to it, one ſin being more ſinfull than another? *Ezek.* 8. 15. *Iohn* 19. 11. But yet it hath ſome analogy of being the chiefeſt evill, as God the chiefeſt good.

Reaſon why ſin is the chiefeſt evill.

For 1. as God is the chiefeſt good, who therefore is to be loved for himſelfe, and other things but for his ſake; ſo alſo is ſin the chiefeſt evil, becauſe it is ſimply to bee avoided for it ſelfe; but other evils become good, yea deſirable when compared with it.

1. Is ſimply evill.

Secondly, as God is the chiefeſt good, becauſe hee is the greateſt happineſſe to himſelfe; ſo ſin, the greateſt

2 Is the worſt puniſhment when God gives a mā up to ſin.

Rom. 1.

evill to it ſelfe: for there can be no worſe puniſhment of it, than its ſelfe; therefore when God would give a man over, as an enemie he meanes never to deale withall more, he gives him up to ſin.

3. It cannot have a worſe Epithete given it than it ſelfe.

And thirdly, it is ſo evill, as it cannot have a worſe *Epithete* given it, than it ſelf; and therefore the Apoſtle, when he would ſpeake his worſt of it, and winde up his expreſſion higheſt, *uſque ad hyperbolem*, cals it by its own name, ſinfull ſinne, ἁμαρτωλὸς ἁμαρτία, *Rom.* 7. 13. that as in God being the greateſt good, *quicquid eſt in Deo eſt Deus ipſe*, therefore his attributes and names are but himſelfe, *idem prædicatur de ſeipſo*: ſo it is with ſin, *quicquid*

eſt

eſt in peccato, peccatum eſt, &c. he can call it no worſe than by its owne name, *ſinfull ſinne.*

USE.

AND what have I been ſpeaking of all this while? Why? but of one ſin in the generall nature of it. There is not a man here, but hath millions of them; as many as the ſands upon the Sea ſhore; yea, as there would be Atomes, were all the world pounded to duſt: it exceeds in number alſo; and therefore ere wee goe any further, let all our thoughts breake off here in wondermēt at the abounding

Wonder at the abounding of ſin

of ſin, above all things elſe; for other things, if they bee great, they are but a few; if many, they are but ſmall: the world, tis a big one indeed, but yet there is but one; the ſands, though innumerable, yet they are but ſmall; your ſinfulneſſe exceeds in both.

Examine our owne eſtates.

And next, let all our thoughts be wound up to the moſt deep and intenſe conſideration of our eſtates; for if one ſin abounds thus, what tongue can expreſſe, or heart can conceive their miſery, who to uſe the Apoſtles phraſe, 1 *Cor.* 15. *are yet in their ſinnes?* that is, ſtand bound to God in their owne ſingle bond only, to anſwer for all their ſinnes themſelves; and cannot, in the

eſtate

eſtate wherein yet they ſtand of impenitency and unbelief, plead the benefit of Chriſts death, to take off and eaſe them of the guilt of one ſin, but all their ſinnes are yet all their owne, which to a man in Chriſt they are not; for his own bonds are cancelled, and given in, and Chriſt entred into bonds for him, and all his ſinnes tranſlated upon him.

Now for a proper character of their eſtate, and ſutable to this expreſſion:

When a mans ſinns may bee ſaid to be his owne.

First then a mans ſinnes may bee ſaid to bee ſtill his owne; when he committeth ſinne, *out of his owne*, that is the full frame and inclination of his heart. Thus the deviſl is ſaid to ſinne, *Iohn* 8. 44. ἐκ τῶν ἰδίων *out of his owne*; the

1. Then he commits ſin out of his owne.

whole frame of his ſpirit is in it; which a man in Chriſt cannot be ſo fully ſaid to do, for he hath a new creature in him *that ſinneth not*, 1 *Iohn* 3. 1, 9. that can ſay even when he ſins, *It is not I, but ſinne.*

2. Then he hates it not.

And ſecondly, then ſin is a mans owne, when he hates it not, but loves it: *The world loves his owne*, ſaith Chriſt, *Iohn* 15. 29. and ſo doth a wicked man his ſinne, *more than any good*; which is *Davids* character, *Pſal.* 52. 3.

3. Then he nouriſheth it.

And thirdly, what is a mans owne, he nouriſheth and cheriſheth; therefore *Epheſ.* 5. 19. *No man hates his owne fleſh, but loveth it, and cheriſheth it*: ſo doe men their ſinnes, when they are their owne. Thoſe great and

and rich oppreſſors, *Iam.* 5.5. are ſaid to *nouriſh their hearts in wantonneſſe*, and in pleaſure, *as in a day of ſlaughter*; as living upon the creame of ſinning, and having ſuch plenty, they pick out none but the ſweeteſt bits to nouriſh their hearts withall.

4. So what a man *provides* for, that is his owne; ſo ſayes the Apoſtle, *A man that provides not for his owne, is worſe, &c.* When therefore men *make proviſion for the fleſh*, as the *phraſe* is, *Rom.* 13.14. have their Caterers and contrivers of their luſts, and whoſe chiefeſt care is every morning, what pleaſures of ſin they have that day to be enjoyed, it is a ſigne that their ſinnes are their owne.

4. Then he provides for it

In

5. Then men live in ſin.

In a word, when men live in ſin', it is the expreſſion uſed 1 *Tim.*5.6. *She that lives in pleaſure, is dead while ſhe lives.* When the revenewes of the comfort of mens lives come in, from the pleaſures or ſin, and that ſupplies them with all thoſe neceſſaries that belong to life; as when it is their element they *drink in like water*; their meate, *they eate the bread of wickedneſſe, Prov.* 1.7. and it goes downe, and troubleth them not; their ſleep alſo, *they cannot ſleep till they have done* or contrived ſome *miſchiefe, ver.* 16. their apparrell, as when *violence and oppreſſion covers them as a garment*, and *pride compaſſeth them as a chaine, Pſal.*73. their recreation alſo, *It is a paſtime for a foole*

foole to doe wickedly, he makes ſport and brags of it, *Prov.* 10.23. yea their health, being *ſick* and diſcontented, when their luſts are not ſatisfied, as *Ahab* was for *Naboths* vineyard; *Amnon grew leane*, when hee could not enjoy his Paramore.

All theſe, as they live in their ſins here, and ſo are dead whileſt they live, and ſo are miſerable, making the greateſt evill their chiefeſt good; ſo when they come to dye (as wee all muſt doe one day) and how ſoone, and how ſuddenly we know not; we cary our ſoules, our precious ſoules, as precious water in a brittle glaſſe, ſoone cracked, and then we are *ſpilt like water, which none can gather up againe*; or but as 2 Sam. 14. 14.

as a candle in a paper lanthorne; in clay walls, full of cranyes, often but a little cold comes in, and blows the candle out;) and then without a through change of heart before, wrought from all ſin, to all godlineſſe, they will *die in their ſinnes*. And all, and the utmoſt of all miſeries is ſpoken in that one word: and therefore *Chriſt*, when he would ſum up all miſeries in one expreſſion, tels the *Phariſees* they ſhould *dye in their ſinnes*, *Iohn* 8. 28.

Vſe

Vſe 2.

AND let us conſider further, that if ſinne be thus above meaſure ſinfull, that *Hell that followeth death*, is then likewiſe above meaſure fearefull. And ſo it is intimated to be a puniſhment *without meaſure*, *Ier.* 30. 11. compared with *Iſa.* 27. *Puniſh them as I puniſh thee* (ſayes God to his own) *but I will puniſh thee in meaſure.* And indeed, ſin being committed againſt God *the King of Kings*, it can never be puniſhed enough. But as the killing of a King, is amongſt men a crime ſo hainous, that no tortures can exceed the deſert of it: we uſe to ſay, all *torments* are too little, any death too good for

The puniſhment of ſin is above meaſure fearfull.

for ſuch a crime. Now *peccatum eſt Dei-cidium*, as I ſaid before, a deſtroying God as much as in us lies: and therefore none but God himſelfe can give it a full puniſhment: therefore it is called *a falling into Gods hands*, *Heb.* 10. 31. which, as he ſayes there, is *fearefull*. For if his *breath* blowes us *to deſtruction*, *Iob* 4. 9. for we are but *duſt heaps*; yea, his nod, *he nods to deſtruction*, *Pſal.* 80. 16. then what is the weight of his hands, even of thoſe hands, *which ſpan the heavens, and hold the earth in the hollow of them?* and if God take it into his hands to puniſh, he will be ſure to doe unto the full. *Sinne* is *mans work*, and *puniſhment* is *Gods*, and *God* will ſhew himſelfe

Eſay 40.

as

as *perfect* in *his worke*, as *man* in *his*.

If ſin be *malum catholicum*, as hath been ſaid, that containes all evils in it; then the puniſhment God will inflict ſhall be *malum catholicum* alſo, containing in it all miſeries; it is a *cup full of mixture*, ſo called *Pſal.* 75. 8. as into which God hath ſtrained the quinteſſence of all miſeries, and *the wicked of the earth muſt drinke the dregs of it*, though it be eternity unto the bottome. And if one ſin deſerves a hell, a puniſhment above meaſure, what will millions of millions doe? And we reade that *every ſin ſhall receive a juſt recompence*, *Heb.* 2. 3. oh let us then take heed of dying in our ſins, and therefore of living in them; for

It containes all evils in it.

for wee ſhall lie in priſon till we have paid the very utmoſt farthing.

And therefore if all this that I have ſaid of it will not engender anſwerable apprehenſions of it in you, (this being but painting the toad, which you can looke upon and handle without affrightment) I wiſh that if without danger you could but lay your eares to hell, that ſtanding as it were behinde the skreene, you might heare ſin ſpoken of in its owne dialect by the oldeſt ſons of perdition there, to heare what *Cain* ſayes of murthering his brother *Abel*; what *Saul* of his perſecuting *David*, and the Prieſts of *Iehovah*; what *Balaam* and *Achitophel* ſay of their curſed counſels and policies;

What the damned ſpeake of ſin in hell.

policies; what *Ahab* ſayes of his oppreſſion of *Naboth*; what *Iudas* of treaſon; and heare what expreſſions they have; withwhat horrors, yellings, groanes, diſtractions, the leaſt ſin is there ſpoken of. If God ſhould take any mans ſoule here, and as hee rapt His, into the third heavens, where he ſaw grace in his fulleſt brightneſſe; ſo carry any ones ſoule into thoſe *chambers of death*, as *Solomon* calls them, and leading him through all, from chamber to chamber, ſhew him the *viſions* of *darkneſſe*, and he there heare all thoſe bedlames cry out, one of this ſinne, another of that, and ſee ſinne as it lookes in hell! But there is one aggravation more of the evill

evill and miſery ſinne brings upon men, I have not ſpoken of yet, that it blindes their eyes, and hardens their hearts, that they doe not ſee, nor lament their miſery, till they be in hell; and then it is too late.

Vſe 3.

BUt what, doth ſin ſo exceed in ſinfulneſſe, and is the venome of it boyled up to ſuch a height of miſchief, that there ſhould be no name in heaven and earth able to grapple with it, and deſtroy it? Is there no antidote, no balme in *Gilead* more ſoveraigne, than it is deadly? Surely yes, God would never have ſuffered ſo potent and malicious an enemy to have

have ſet foot in his dominions, but that he knew how to conquer it, and that not by puniſhing of it only in hell, but by deſtroying it: only it is too potent for all the creatures to encounter with. This victory is alone reſerved for *Chriſt*, it can dye by no other hand, that he may have the glory of it; which therefore is the top of his glory, as mediator, and his higheſt title, the memory of which he beares written in his name JESUS, *for he ſhall ſave his people from their ſinnes*, *Mat.* 1. 21. And therefore the Apoſtle *Paul*, his chiefeſt Herauld, proclaimes this victory with a world of ſolemnity and triumph, 1 *Cor.* 15. 36. *Oh death, where is thy ſting? O grave, where is thy victory? the*

Only Ieſus Chriſt can conquer ſin.

the ſting of death is ſinne, the ſtrength of ſinne is the Law: but thankes be to God that gives us the victory through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt: which yet againe addes to the *Demonſtration of the ſinfulneſſe of it:* for the ſtrength of ſin was ſuch, that like *Goliah* it would have defied the whole hoſt of heaven and earth. *It was not poſſible the blood of Bulls and Goates ſhould take away ſinne, Heb.* 10. 4. nor would the riches of the world, or the blood of men have been a ſufficiẽt ranſom: *Will the Lord be pleaſed with rivers of oyle? ſhall I give my firſt born for my tranſgreſſion?* No, ſayes hee, there is no proportion, for thy firſt borne is but the fruit of thy body, and ſinne is the

ſinne

sinne of thy soule, Mich.6.7. it must cost more to redeeme a soule than so, *Psal.* 49. 9. No, couldest thou bring rivers of teares, in stead of rivers of oyle; which if any thing, were like to pacifie God, yet are they but the excrements of thy braines; but sinne is the sinne of thy heart: yea all the righteousnesse that we could ever doe, cannot make amends for one sinne: for suppose it perfect, when as yet it is but *dung, Mal.* 2. 3. and a *menstruous cloath*, yet thou owest it already as thou art a creature; and one debt cannot pay another. If then we should goe a begging to all the Angels, who never sinned, let them lay all their stocke together, it would begger

ger them all to pay for one ſin: no, it is not the merit of Angels will doe it; for ſin is the tranſgreſſion, the deſtruction of the Law, *Pſal.* 109. 1. and the leaſt ἰῶτα is more worth than heaven, and all that is therein.

Chriſts righteouſneſſe exceedeth ſins ſinfulneſſe.

Only, though it be thus unconquerably ſinfull by all created powers, it hath not gone beyond the price that Chriſt hath paid for it; the Apoſtle compares to this very purpoſe, *ſinne* and *Chriſts righteouſneſſe* together, *Rom.* 5.15,20. It is true, ſayes he, that *ſin abounds*, and that *one ſin*, τὸ παράπτωμα, and inſtanceth in *Adams* ſinne, which ſtaineth all mens natures to the end of the world; yet ſayes he, the *gift of righteouſneſſe by Chriſt abounds much*

much more; abounds to flowing over, ὑπερπλεόνασεν, ſayes the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 14. *as the Sea doth above mole-hills*, *Mal.* 7. 14. Though therefore it would undoe all the Angels, yet *Chriſts riches are unſearchable*, *Epheſ.* 3. 8. hee hath ſuch riches of merit, as are able to pay all thy debts the very firſt day of thy mariage with him, though thou hadſt been a ſinner millions of yeares, afore the creation to this day: and when that is done, there is enough left to purchaſe thee more grace and glory than all the Angels have in heaven. In a word, he is *able to ſave to the utmoſt*, *all that come to God by him*, *Hebr.* 7. 5. let their ſins bee what they will.

Come to God thorow Chriſt and take him to be our Lord and King.

But then we muſt come to him, and *to God by him*, and take him as our Lord, and King, and head, and huſband, as he is freely tendered, wee muſt bee made one with him, and have our hearts divorced from all our ſins for ever. And why not now? doe we yet looke for another Chriſt? and to allude to us, as *Naomi* ſaid to *Ruth*, Is there yet any more ſons in my wombe, that they may be your husbands? So ſay I, Hath God any more ſuch ſonnes? or is not this Chriſt good enough? or are we afraid of being happy too ſoone, in being maried to him?

Sin and Chriſt cannot ſtand together.

But yet if wee will have Chriſt indeed (without whom we are undone) *how*

ſhall

ſhall we then continue in ſin, which is thus above meaſure ſinfull? no not in one. The Apoſtle ſpeakes there in the language of impoſſibility and inconſiſtency. Chriſt, and the raigne of one ſin, they cannot ſtand together. Rom. 6.

And indeed, we will not ſo much as take Chriſt, untill firſt we have ſeene more or leſſe this viſion here, and ſin appeare to us, as to him, above meaſure ſinfull: naturally we ſlight it and make a mock of, and account it preciſeneſſe to ſtick and make conſcience of it: but if once ſin thus appeares to any but in its owne colours, that man will looke upon the leaſt ſin then, as upon hell it ſelfe; and like a man affrighted, feare in all his wayes, leſt he

We will not take Chriſt untill ſin appeares ſinfull to us.

ſhould meet with ſin, and ſtarts at the very appearance of it; he weepes if ſin doe but ſee him, and he doe but ſee it in himſelfe and others; and cryes out as *Ioſeph* did, *How ſhall I doe this, and ſin?* and then a man will make out for Chriſt, as a condemned man for life, as a man that can no longer live, *oh give me Chriſt, or elſe I die*; and then if upon this Chriſt appeares to him, and *manifeſts himſelfe*, as his promiſe is to them that ſeeke him, *Iohn* 14.21. his heart thereupon will much more deteſt and loath it: he ſaw it evill afore, but then it comes to have a new tincture added, which makes it infinitely more ſinfull in his eyes; for he then lookes upon every ſin

ſin as guilty of Chriſts blood, as dyed with it, though *covered by it; the grace of God appearing, teacheth us to deny all ungodlineſſe and worldly luſts. The love of Chriſt conſtraines him.* Thinks he, Shall I live in that for which Chriſt dyed? ſhall that be my life, which was his death? did he that never knew ſin, undergoe the torment for it, and ſhall I be ſo unkinde as to enjoy the pleaſure of it? No, but as *David* when hee was very thirſty, and had water of the well of *Bethleem* brought him, with the hazard of mens lives, powred it on the ground; for ſayes he, *It is the blood of theſe men:* So ſayes hee, even when the cup of pleaſures is at his very lips,

It coſt the blood of Chriſt, and ſo poures it upon the ground. And as the love of Chriſt conſtraines him, ſo the power of Chriſt doth change him. Kings may pardon Traytors, but they cannot change their hearts; but Chriſt pardons none he doth not make new creatures, and all *old things paſſe away*, becauſe hee makes them friends, favourites to live with, and delight in; and if men *put on Chriſt, and have learned him, as the truth is in Ieſus, they put off as concerning the former converſation the old man, with the deceitfull luſts*; and he *ceaſeth from ſin*, that is, from the courſe of any knowne ſinne: they are the Apoſtles owne words, which ſhall judge us; and

1 Pet. 5. 1, 2.

and if we ſhould expect ſalvation from him upon any other tearmes, wee are deceived; for *Chriſt is author of ſalvation to them only that obey* him, *Heb.* 5. 9.

Aggravations

OF

SINNING

AGAINST

KNOWLEDGE.

BY

THO: GOODVVIN, *B.D.*

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SINNING

KNOWLEDGE

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FINIS.

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING AGAINST KNOWLEDGE.

ROM. 1.21.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankfull, but became vaine in their imaginations, and their fooliſh heart was darkened.

THere are two general aggravations the Apoſtle inſiſts on, in theſe two Chapters, of the Gentiles

Gentiles ſinfulneſſe: Firſt their *unthankfulneſſe, ver.* 21. in *deſpiſing the riches of Gods goodneſs*, ch. 2. 4. Secondly, of *Rebellion*, in ſinning *againſt knowledge: That when they knew him, they glorified him not as God.* And of all other he inculcateth this of ſinning againſt knowledge, as the greateſt: for bringing in a long, large, and particular indictment of many ſeverall ſinnes, *Idolatry, ver.* 23. *unnaturall uncleanneſſe, ver.* 26. *&c.* and all *kindes of unrighteouſneſſe, ver.* 29. hee doth both in the beginning, and end of the bill, bring in this aggravation, that *they ſinned* againſt knowledge in all theſe. So *ver.* 18. he begins the indictment and promulgation of Gods wrath above all

all for this, that *they withheld the truth in unrighteousnesse*; which was as much as all that unrighteousnesse committed, barely in it selfe considered: And then again in the end, when he comes to pronounce sentence, hee comes in with this, after all particulars had been reckoned up, *Who knowing the judgment of God against those which doe such things, yet doe them.*

So that this Doctrine is cleare from hence, That *to sin against knowledge*, either in omitting good duties which we know wee ought to performe, or committing of sins wee know wee ought not to doe, *is the highest aggravation* of sinfulnesse.

Doct. To sin against knowledg is the highest aggravation of sinning.

I put both in both ſinnes of omiſſion and commiſſion: for ſo the particular ſinnes the *Gentiles* are taxed for here, are of both ſorts; as *not glorifying*, or *worſhipping God*, as well as *turning his glory into a lie*, *&c.* to omit prayer, when your conſciences tell you, you ought to doe it: to omit holy diſcourſe, examining the heart, when you know you ought to do them, are as well ſinnes againſt knowledge, as to tell a lye againſt your knowledge, or as to ſteale and forſweare, or murder, or be drunke, &c.

Now when I ſay, it is an aggravation to theſe ſinnes, my meaning is this: That take any ſinne thou thinkeſt moſt groſſe, and view it barely in the act of it, put the act nakedly

nakedly in the one ſcale, be it a ſinne of uncleanneſſe, or drunkenneſſe; and then put this circumſtance which was added to it in the other ſcale, that before and when thou diddeſt it, thou kneweſt it to be a ſinne, this alone weighs as much, yea more than the ſinne it ſelfe doth: that as it is ſaid of *Herod*, that *he added this to all his other ſinnes, that he caſt Iohn in priſon*, who told him of his *Herodias*, and ſo is made as much as all his former ſinnes: ſo is this brought in here, that in and unto all their unrighteouſneſſe, this was added, *they withheld the truth*, the light of their conſciences (which is as a Prophet from God) they did impriſon *in unrighteouſneſſe*, *ver.* 18. And

therfore when *Daniel* would convince *Balſhazzar* of his deſervedneſſe to loſe his Kingdome, and that he was not able to *hold weight in the ballance*, *Dan.* 5. 22. what puts hee into the other ſcale againſt him to weigh him up, and to ſhew he was *too light*, *ver.* 21, 22? hee tels him how his *father knew the God of heaven*, and how *that* his knowledge coſt him ſeven yeares the learning among wilde beaſts, and *thou* (ſayes he) *his ſon knoweſt all this, and yet didſt not humble thy ſelfe.* Here is the aggravation weighs downe all: he knew the God of heaven againſt whom he ſinned, and that judgement on his Father for his pride; and then withall he tels him, that *this God, in whoſ*

hands

hands is thy breath, and all thy wayes, thou haſt not glorified. I name this place among many others, becauſe it is parallel with this in the text. Ile name no more, but give *reaſons* and *demonſtrations* for it.

First, *Demonſtrations.*

The greatneſſe of this kinde of ſinning might many wayes bee made appeare; we will demonſtrate it onely by comparing it with other kindes of ſinning.

1 Demonſtrations of the point, by comparing it with other kinds of ſinning.

To ſin, though out of *ſimple ignorance*, when that ignorance is but the *cauſa ſine qua non* of ſinning, that is, ſo as if a man had knowne it a ſin, he had not done it, doth not yet make the fact not to be a ſin, though it leſſeneth it. For *Luke* 12. 48. *Hee that did not know his Maſters*

will, was beaten, when the thing committed was worthy of ſtripes, though he did not know ſo much, becauſe the thing deſerves it. And the reaſon is, becauſe the law being once promulged, as 1. to *Adam* it was, and put into his heart, as the common arke of mankinde; though the tables be loſt, yet our ignorance doth not make the Law of none effect. For the *Law of nature* for ever binds, that is, all that was written in *Adams* heart, becauſe it was thereby then publiſhed in him, and to him for us. But *poſitive lawes*, as I may call them, as to *beleeve in Chriſt*, &c. anew delivered, binde not, but where they are publiſht. *Ioſiah* rent his clothes, when the booke of the Law

was

was found, becauſe the ordinances were not kept, although they had not knowne the Law of many yeares; yet becauſe they ought to have knowne it, therefore for all their ignorance, he feared wrath would come upon all *Iſrael.* So alſo *Lev.* 5. 17. ſins of ignorance were to bee ſacrificed for: yet however, it leſſeneth the ſin, therefore *he ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes.*

And ſure, if ignorance leſſeneth them, knowledge aggravates; for *contrariorum eadem eſt ratio:* therefore *he that knowes, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes.* Yea ſuch difference is there, that God is ſaid to *winke* at ſinnes of *ignorance, Acts* 17. 30. *The time of this ignorance God*

winkes at. Whiles they had no knowledge, God tooke no notice: yea, and he abates ſomething for ſuch ſinnes, becauſe the creature hath a *cloake*, hath ſomething to ſay for it ſelfe; (as Chriſt ſayes, *Iohn* 15. 22.) but when againſt knowledge, they have no cloak. Yea farther, *Chriſt* makes a *ſin of ignorance* to be *no ſin*, in compariſon: So there, *If I had not ſpoken and done thoſe workes never man did, they had had* [*no ſinne.*] (That is) none in compariſon, but *now they have no cloak*, no ſhelter to award the ſtripes, or plea to abate of them.

Howmuch ſinnes againſt knowledg do tranſcend ſins of ignorance.

And that you may ſee the ground of this vaſt difference betweene ſins of ignorance, and againſt knowledge, conſider

sider first, that if a man sin (suppose the act the same) out of *ignorance* meerely, there may bee a supposition, that if he had knowne it, he would not have done it; and that as soone as hee doth know it, he would or might repent of it. So 1 *Cor.* 2. 8. *If they had knowne, they had not crucified the Lord of Glory.* The like sayes Christ of *Tyre, Sidon,* and *Gomorrha, that if the same things had been done in them, they would have repented.* But now when a man knowes it afore, and also considers it in the very committing it, and yet doth it, then there is no roome for such a supposition, and lesse hope. For what is it that should reduce this man to repentance?

1. In sins of ignorance there may be a supposition, if he had known it, hee would not have done it: but not so in these.

is it not his knowledge? now if that had no power to keepe him from his sinne, then it may be judged, that it will not bee of force to bring him to repentance for it; for by sinning, the heart is made more hard, and the knowledge and the authority of it weakened and lessened, as all power is, when contemned and resisted, *Rom.* 1. 21. *their foolish heart becomes darker.* *Aristotle* himselfe hath a touch of this notion in the third of his Ethicks, that if a man sinne out of *ignorance*, when hee knowes it, he repents of it; if out of *passion*, when the passion is over, he is sorry for what he hath done: but when a man sins deliberately, and out of knowledge, it is a sign he

hee is fixed and set in mischiefe; and therefore it is counted wickednesse and malice. And hence it is, that those that have been *enlightned* with the highest kinde of light, but that of saving grace, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5. and *Heb.* 10. *If they sin wilfully* after such a knowledge of the truth, God lookes on them, as those that will never repent. And therefore likewise the schoole gives this as the reason why the devils sin obstinately, and cannot repent, because of their full knowledge they sinne with; they know all in the full latitude that it may be knowne, and yet goe on.

2. The vast difference betweene them, appears in the repentance God accepts for each.

Secondly, the vast difference that in Gods account is put betweene *sins of knowledge*,

ledge, and of *ignorance*, will appeare by the different reſpect & regard that God hath to them, in the repentance he requires and accepts for them; and that both in the acts of repentance, and alſo in the ſtate of grace and repentance, upon which God accepts a man, or for want of which hee rejecteth him.

A generall repentance for the one, not ſo for the other.

Firſt, when a man comes to performe the acts of repentance, and to humble himſelfe for ſin, and to turne from it, God exacteth not, that ſins of ignorance ſhould particularly be repented of. But if they bee repented of but in the generall, and in the lumpe, be they never ſo great, God accepts it. This is intimated *Pſal.* 19. 12.

Who

Who can understand his errour ? cleanse mee from my secret sinnes : that was confession enough. But sinnes of knowledge must be particularly repented of, and confessed, and that againe and againe; as *David* was forced to doe for his murder and adultery, or a man shall never have pardon. Yea farther, greater difference will appeare, in regard of the state of grace and repentance : for a man may lye in a sinne he doth not know to bee a sinne, and yet be in the state of *Grace*, as the *Patriarchs* in *Poligamie*, and in divorceing their wives : but to *lye in a sinne of knowledge*, is not compatible *with grace* : but unlesse a man main-

maintaineth a conſtant fight againſt it, hateth it, confeſſeth it, forſaketh it, hee cannot have mercy. This cannot ſtand with uprightneſſe of heart. A friend may keepe correſpondency with one, he ſuſpects not to be an enemy unto his friend, and bee true to his friendſhip notwithſtanding: but if hee knowes him to be an enemy, he muſt breake utterly with the one, if he leanes to the other.

3. Some kindes of ſinning againſt knowledg exclude from mercy, which done ignorantly leave a capacity of it

Thirdly, yet farther in the third place, ſo vaſt is the difference, that ſome kinde of ſinnes committed out of and againſt knowledge, utterly exclude from mercy for time to come; which done out of ignorance, remained capable of, and might have obtained

obtained it; as *perſecuting the Saints, blaſpheming Chriſt, &c. Pauls* will was as much in thoſe acts themſelves, and as hearty as thoſe that ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt:* for he was *mad* againſt the Church, and in theſe ſins, as himſelfe ſayes, not ſinning willingly herein only, but being caried on with *fury*, as hot and as forward as the *Phariſees* that ſinned that ſin: onely ſayes he, 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. *I did it ignorantly, therefore I obtained mercy.* Though it was *ignorantly* done, yet there was *need of mercy:* but yet in that he did it but ignorantly, there was a capacity and place *for mercy*, which otherwiſe had not beene. But thus to ſin *after a man hath received the knowledge of the truth,*

truth, ſhuts a man out from mercy, *Heb.* 10. and *there is no more ſacrifice for ſin, for ſuch ſins*; I ſay, ſuch ſins as theſe, thus directly againſt the Goſpell, when committed with knowledge. For ſins againſt the Law, though againſt knowledge, there was an atonement, as appeares *Levit.* 6. from the 1. verſe to the 8. where hee inſtanceth in *forſwearing*: But *to perſecute the Saints*, and *Chriſts truth, with malice*, after knowledge of it, *there is no more ſacrifice*: not that ſimply the ſin is ſo great in the act it ſelfe of perſecution, for *Paul* did it out of ignorance; but becauſe it is out of knowledge: ſo vaſt a difference doth knowledge and ignorance put betweene the guilt

guilt of the ſame ſinne.

And therefore indeed, to conclude this in the laſt place, this is the higheſt ſtep of the ladder, next to turning off: the very higheſt but that of ſinning againſt the *Holy Ghoſt:* which muſt needs argue it the higheſt aggravation of ſinning, when it aſcends ſo high, when it brings a man to the brinke, and next to falling into the bottomleſſe pit, irrecoverably. And therfore to *ſin preſumptuouſly* (which is all one) and to *ſin againſt knowledge*, (as appears *Numb.* 15. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. it being there oppoſed to ſinning out of ignorance, (ſuch a ſinne as *David* did, of whom it is ſaid, 2 *Sam.* 12. 9. *that he deſpiſed the word of the Lord:* which phraſe

4. Sinning againſt knowledg is the higheſt to ſinning againſt the holy Ghoſt.

phraſe alſo is uſed to expreſs ſins of preſumption, *ver.* 31. of that 15. of *Numbers.*) To *ſin*, I ſay, *preſumptuouſly*, is the higheſt ſtep: So in *Davids* account, *Pſal.* 19. 12, 13. For firſt he prayes, *Lord keep me from ſecret ſins*, (which he maketh ſins of ignorance) and then next hee prayes againſt *preſumptuous ſinnes*, (which, as the oppoſition ſhewes, are *ſins againſt knowledge:*) For (ſayes he) *if they get dominion over me, I ſhall not be free from* [*that great offence.*] That is, that unpardonable ſin, which ſhall never be forgiven: ſo as theſe are neareſt it of any other: yet not ſo, as that every one that fals into ſuch a ſin commits it, but he is nigh to it, at the next ſtep to it. For to com

commit that ſin, but *two things* are required; *light* in the *minde*, and *malice* in the *heart*; not *malice* alone, unleſſe there be *light*; for then that Apoſtle had ſinned it: ſo as knowledge is the Parent of it, *it is after receiving the knowledge of the truth*, *Heb.* 10. 27, 28.

Theſe are the *Demonſtrations* of it, the *Reaſons* are

Firſt, becauſe knowledge of God and his wayes, is the greateſt mercy, next to ſaving grace: *He hath not dealt* [*ſo*] *with every Nation.* Wherein? *In giving the knowledge of his wayes*: and as it is thus, ſo to a nation, ſo to a man; and therefore *Chriſt* ſpeaking of the gift of *knowledge*, and giving the reaſon why it ſo greatly condemneth,

Secondly, Reaſons, which are 6. 1. Becauſe knowledg is the greateſt mercy

demneth, *Luke* 12.48. ſayes, *For to whom* [*much*] *is given, much is required.* As if hee had ſaid, To know his Maſters will, that is the great talent of all other. There is a [*much*] in that. Thus it was in the Heathens eſteem alſo: They acknowledged their fooliſh wiſdome in morall and naturall *Philoſophie*, their greateſt *excellency*: and therfore *Plato* thanked God for three things; that he was a *man*, an *Athenian*, and a *Philoſopher*. And *Rom.* 1.22. the Apoſtle mentions it as that excellency they did profeſſe. And *Solomon*, of all vanities ſayes this is the beſt vanity, and that it *exceeds folly, as light doth darkneſſe*, *Eccleſ.* 2. But ſurely much more is the *knowledge of the Law*,

Law, and *of God*, as we have it revealed to us; this muſt needs be much more excellent. And ſo the Jewes eſteemed theirs; as in this ſecond Chapter of the Romanes, the Apoſtle ſhewes alſo of them, that they *made their boaſt of the Law, and their forme of knowledge of it, and approving the things that are excellent.* And what doe the two great bookes of the creatures, and the word, and all meanes elſe ſerve for, but to encreaſe knowledge? If therefore all tend to this, this is then the greateſt mercy of all the reſt.

2. Reaſon. Knowledg is the immediate guide of men in all their wayes: A man ſins againſt his Guide.

For ſecondly, God hath appointed knowledge as the immediate guide of men in all their wayes, to *bring* them to *ſalvation and repentance*,

tance, for to *that it leads them*. It is that ſame τὸ ἡγεμονικὸν, as the *Philoſopher* called it: and therefore the *Law*, *Rom.* 7. 1, 2. is compared to an *Husband*, (ſo far as it is written in, or revealed in the heart) that as an *Husband is the guide of the wife in her youth*, ſo is the *Law* to the heart. And whereas *beaſts* are ruled *by a bit and bridle*, God hee rules men by knowledge. And therefore if men bee wicked, notwithſtanding this light, they muſt needes ſin highly, ſeeing there is no other curbe for them, as they are men, but this: if he will deale with them as men, this is the onely way; and therefore if that will not doe it, it is ſuppoſed nothing will.

It

It is *knowledge* makes men capable of sin, which *beasts* are not; therefore the more knowledge, (if men be wicked withall) the more sinne must necessarily be reckoned to them: so as God doth not simply look what mens actions and affections are, but chiefly what their knowledg is, and accordingly judgeth men more or lesse wicked. I may illustrate this by that comparison, which I may allude unto: That as in *Kingdomes*, *God* measures out the wickednesse thereof, and so his punishments accordingly, principally, by the guides the governors therof, what they are, and what they doe; as in the 5. of *Ieremy*, the 4. ver. it appeares; where first God lookes upon *the poore* people,

but,

but, he excuſeth them, *theſe are fooliſh, and know not the way of the Lord*: and therefore God would have beene moved to ſpare the Kingdome, notwithſtanding their ſins. But from them at the 5. verſe he goes to view the *Rulers, I will get me to the great men, for theſe have known the way of the Lord*: *and* when he ſaw that *theſe had broken the bands*, then, *how ſhall I pardon thee for this?* So is it in his judgement towards a particular man: when God lookes downe upon a man, and ſees him in his courſes exceeding looſe, and wicked, he lookes firſt upon thoſe rude affections in him, which are uncleane, profane, debaucht, greedy of all wickedneſſe; Ah but ſayes he, theſe

are

are fooliſh of themſelves, but I will looke upon his underſtanding, and upon the ſuperiour faculties, which are the guides of theſe affections, and ſee what they dictate to theſe unruly affections, to reſtraine them: And when hee findes that the guides themſelves are enlightned, *& have known the way of the Lord*, and that the will and the affections, though informed with much knowledg, yet *break al bands*, then *how ſhall I pardon thee? Thee*, who art a knowing drũkard, and a knowing unclean perſon, &c. ſo as thus to ſin, aggravates and maketh *ſin out of meaſure ſinfull.*

That knowledg is ſo, proved, in that an erroneous conſcience bindeth.

Now that *knowledge* and *reaſon* is a mans *guide*, will further appeare by this: That even *erroneous knowledge* doth

doth put an *obligation*, a *bond*, and a *tye* upon a man: which can bee in no other reſpect, but becauſe knowledge is appointed to be a mans guide. Thus if a man thinkes a thing (which is in it ſelfe *common* and *indifferent*) to bee a *ſin*, and forbidden, (as *Rom.* 14. 4.) although the *Law* forbids it not, yet *to him it is unclean*, though *in Chriſt* it is *not uncleane*, that is, by the *Law of Chriſt*. For this his knowledge and judgement of the thing hath *to him the force of a Law*: for it propounds it to him as a *Law*, and *as from God*; which *reaſon* of *his*, *God* hath appointed as his *immediate guide*: and the *will* is to follow nothing that is *evill*, which is repreſented to it, as evill; this is the

Law

Law of meere nature in al conditions; therefore if a man ſhould doe an action which is in it ſelfe good, if he thought it to bee evill, hee ſhould ſin, and ſo *è contra*, for hee goes againſt the dictate of nature. So that *erroneous knowledge*, though againſt the Law, is a *law to me*, though not *per ſe*, yet *per accidens*. Now therefore if to goe againſt a falſe light of conſcience bee yet a ſinne, though it proves that the commandement allowes the thing was done, and was for it, then to go againſt the true light of the Law, how ſinfull is it?

3. Knowledge layeth a further obligation to obedience.

Again, thirdly, the knowledge of the law bindes the perſon ſo much the more to obedience, by how much the

more hee knowes it : ſo as though it would bee a ſinne, when he knows not the Law to tranſgreſſe it, yet when he knowes it, it is a greater ſin. It is true indeed, that *conſcience* and the *Law*, when they meete, make up but *one Law*, not two diſtinct Laws: and therefore in *ſinning againſt knowledge*, though a man doth not commit two diſtinct ſins, yet the knowledge of it doth adde a further degree of ſinfulneſſe to it : As a cloath is the ſame cloath when it is white, that it is when it is dyed with a ſcarlet dye; yet then it hath a *dye*, a *tincture* given it, which is more worth than the cloath : and ſo when you ſinne, not knowing the Law, the ſinne is the ſame for

for ſubſtance, it would bee if you had knowne it; yet that knowledge dyes it, makes it a *ſcarlet ſin*, as *Eſay* ſpeakes, far greater and deeper in demerit than the ſin it ſelfe: and the ground of this is, becauſe *Lawes then come to be in force, when they are promulged*, and made knowne: ſo as the *more* they are *promulged* and knowne, the *more* is the *force* of their *binding*, and ſo the greater *guilt*. Therefore *Deut.* 11. 12. 3. 8. God ſtraitens the cords more, the binding force of the law more upon thoſe Jewes conſciences, to whom hee at the firſt perſonally with majeſty had promulgated it, then upon their children, though upon theirs alſo. Now if all Gods

Lawes come in force whē promulged.

Lawes, being made knowne to *Adam*, binde us, and are in force, and this when wee know them not; then if wee doe know them, or might know them, they bind much more: and ſtill the more clearely we know them, the obligation increaſeth, and the guilt inſuing with it: and the rather, becauſe now when we come to know them, they are anew promulged, in a way of a peculiar mercy; we having defaced the knowledge of them in our fall.

4. There is the more contempt caſt upon the Law.

Fourthly, when the *Law* being *knowne* is *broken*, there is the more *contempt* caſt upon the *Law*, and the *Law-giver* alſo; and ſo a higher degree of ſinning. And therefore *Numbers* 15. 30. *Hee that*

that ſins out of knowledge, is ſaid *to reproach the Lord*, and *to deſpiſe the word.* And therfore *Saul* ſinning againſt knowledge, *Samuel* calleth it *rebellion*: and though it were but in a ſmall thing, yet he parallels it with witchcraft. So alſo *Iob* 24. 13. *they are ſaid to rebell*, when they *ſin againſt light*; becauſe rebellion is added to diſobedience: For knowledge is an *Officer* ſet to ſee the *Law executed*, and fulfilled; and makes God preſent to the conſcience. Therefore *Rom.* 2. 14. it is called a *witneſſe*; and therefore in *ſinning againſt knowledge*, men are ſaid to *ſin before the face of the Lord himſelf*; now what a great contempt is that? Therefore alſo *Pſal.* 50. the

hypocrite ſinning againſt knowledge, is ſaid to *caſt the law of God behinde his backe*: ſo as there is a contempt in this ſinning, which is in no other.

5 In ſins againſt knowledg, the will of the ſinner cloſeth more with ſin, as ſin.

Fifthly, the more *knowledge* a man ſinneth againſt, the more *the will* of the ſinner is diſcovered to bee for *ſin*, as *ſin*. Now *voluntariũ eſt regula & menſura actionum moralium: willingneſſe in ſinning*, is the *ſtandard and meaſure of ſins*. The leſſe will, the leſſe ſin: ſo much is cut off, the leſſe the will cloſeth with it; at leaſt wiſe ſo much is added, by how much the will is more in it: and therefore the higheſt degree of ſinning is expreſt to us by *ſinning willingly*, and this *after knowledge*, *Heb.* 10.

Now

Now though an ignorant man commits the act as willingly, as when *Paul* perſecuted the Church, yet he commits it not conſidered *as ſin*, till hee hath the knowledge of it, but then when it is diſcovered to bee ſin, and the more clearely it is ſo diſcovered, the wil may be ſaid to joyne with it as ſin. Therefore the Apoſtle ſayes, *To him that knowes to doe welt, and doth it not, to him it is ſin. Iames* 4. 17. becauſe by his knowledge the thing is repreſented as ſin; and ſo hee cloſeth with it the more, under that notion and apprehenſion.

6. In ſinning againſt knowledg a man condemnes himſelfe.

Sixthly, in ſinning *againſt knowledge*, a man *condemnes himſelfe*; but when out of *ignorance* meerely the

Law onely doth condemne him. So *Rom.* 2. 1. *A man* having *knowledge* in *that wherein he judgeth another, he condemneth himſelf.* So *Rom.* 14. Now as *ſelf-murder* is the *higheſt* degree of murder, and an aggravation of it; ſo *ſelf-condemning* muſt needs be reckoned. God tooke it as a great advantage over him that hid his talent, that *out of thine owne mouth I will condemne thee, thou wicked ſervant.*

3. Things handled concerning ſins againſt knowledg.

The doctrine being thus proved, Firſt, I will explain, *what it is to ſin againſt knowledge.*

Secondly, I will give the *aggravations* of it.

Thirdly, I will give *rules* to *meaſure ſins of knowledge by*, and the greatneſſe of them

them in any act.

Laſtly, the uſe of all.

For the firſt, what it is to ſin againſt knowledge. Firſt, to explaine it, I premiſe theſe diſtinctions.

1. What it is to ſin againſt knowledg, explained. 1. Diſtinction. To ſinne with knowledg & againſt knowledg doe differ.

The firſt diſtinction. That it is one thing to ſin *with knowledge*, another thing *againſt knowledge*.

There are many ſins doe paſſe from a man *with his knowledge*, which yet are not *againſt knowledge*. This is to be obſerved for the removal of a ſcruple which may ariſe in ſome that are godly, who elſe may be wounded with this doctrine through a miſtake.

A *regenerate man* is, and muſt needs bee ſuppoſed guilty of *more knowne ſins*, than an *unregenerate man*:

and yet he commits *fewer againſt knowledge*, than he.

A regenerate man guilty of more ſins knowne, than another.

First, I ſay, he is *guilty of more knowne ſins*: For hee takes notice of every ſinfull diſpoſition that is ſtirring in him, every by-end, every contrariety unto holineſſe, deadneſſe to duty, reluctancy to ſpirituall duties: and when regenerated, beginneth to ſee and know more evill by himſelfe, than ever he did before: he ſees as the Apoſtle ſayes of himſelfe, *Rom.* 7. 10. *all concupiſcence:* and the holier a man is, the more he diſcerns and knows his ſins: So ſayes the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 7. 18. *I know that in me dwels no good thing.* And *ver.* 21. *I finde when I would doe good, evill is preſent with me.* And 23. *I ſee another law.*

law. All theſe, he ſayes, he perceived and found daily in himſelfe : and the more holy that he grew, the more he ſaw them. For the purer and clearer the light of Gods Spirit ſhines in a man, the more ſins hee knowes : hee will ſee luſts ſteaming up, flying in his heart, like moats in the Sun, or ſparkes out of a furnace, which elſe he had not ſeene : the clearer the Sun-beame is which is let into the heart, the more thou wilt ſee them.

Yet not of more ſins againſt knowledg.

But yet in the ſecond place, I adde, that nevertheleſſe he *ſinnes leſſe againſt knowledge :* For then wee are properly ſaid to ſin againſt knowledge, when wee doe take the fulfilling of a luſt, or the performance of an

an outward action, a duty, or the like, into deliberation and conſideration, and conſider motives againſt the ſin, or to the duty, and yet commit that ſin, yeeld to it, and nouriſh that luſt, and omit that duty: Here now we ſin not only *with knowledge*, but *againſt knowledge*: becauſe knowledge ſtept in, and oppoſed us in it, comes to interrupt and prevent us: but now in thoſe failings in duty, and ſtirring of luſts in the regenerate afore mentioned, the caſe is otherwiſe: they are committed indeed with knowledge, but not againſt it: For it is not in the power of knowledge to prevent them; for *motus primo primi non cadunt ſub libertatem*; but yet though ſuch ſins will

ariſe

ariſe againe and againe, yet ſayes a good heart, *they muſt not think to paſſe uncontrouled and unſeen:* Therefore let not poore ſoules miſtake me, as if I meant, throughout this diſcourſe, of all ſins which are knowne to be ſins, but I meane ſuch ſins as are committed againſt knowledge: that is, when knowledge comes and examines a ſin, in or before the committing of it, brings it to the Law, conteſts againſt it, condemnes it, and yet a man approveth it, and conſenteth to it; when a duty and a ſin are brought before knowledge, as *Barrabas* and *Chriſt* afore *Pilate*, and thy knowledge doth againe and againe tell thee ſuch a ſin is a great ſin, and ought to be crucified, and yet thou

thou cryeſt, let it goe; and ſo for the duty, it tels thee againe and againe it ought to be ſubmitted unto, and yet thou omitteſt it, and committeſt the ſin, chooſeſt *Barrabas* rather than *Chriſt*, theſe are ſins againſt knowledge: now ſuch ſins againſt knowledge breake a mans peace, and the more conſideration before had, the more the peace is broken.

2. Diſtinction. Men ſin againſt knowledg, either objectively, or circumſtantially only.

The ſecond diſtinction is, that men ſin againſt knowledge, either *directly*, or *collaterally*: *objectively*, or *circumſtantially*.

I. What it is to ſin directly againſt knowledg.

Firſt *directly*: when *knowledge* it ſelfe is the thing men abuſe, or fight againſt, becommeth the *object*, the *terminus*, the butt and mark ſhot at; this is to ſin directly againſt

againſt knowledge it ſelfe.

The ſecond way, *collaterally*, is, when knowledge is but a *circumſtance* in our ſins: ſo as the pleaſure of ſome ſin (we know to bee a ſin) is the thing aimed at; and that our knowledge ſteps but in betweene to hinder us in it, and we commit it notwithſtanding, *though we doe know it*; here knowledge is indeed ſinned againſt, yet but *collaterally*, and as a ſtander by, but as a circumſtance only, ſhot at *per accidens*, *concomitanter*, and by the by, as one that ſteps in to part a fray is ſmitten, for labouring to hinder them in their ſin, as the Sodomites quarrelled with *Lot*: they are both found in this Chapter, and therfore come fitly within the compaſſe

2 What to ſin againſt knowledg circumſtahtially only.

passe of this discourse.

This distinction explained out of this Chapter.

First, This *collaterall* kinde of sinning against knowledge is mentioned in the 21. ver. where he sayes, *They knew God, yet they glorified him not*: there knowledge is made but a circumstance of their sinning; they sinned against it but collaterally. But then that other kinde of sinning directly against knowledge, is mentioned ver. 28. *They liked not to retaine God in their knowledge*: that is, they hated this knowledge it self, so as now they did not onely love sin, they knew to be sin, but also they loved not the knowledge of it; so that because both are thus clearely instanced in, wee will speake of both more largely.

Now

Now ſins *directly againſt knowledge* it ſelfe are many: I will reduce the chiefe heads of them into two branches:

Firſt, in regard of our ſelves.

Secondly, in regard of others.

Sins directly *againſt knowledge*, reduced to two Heads

Firſt, in regard of our ſelves, five wayes wee may thus ſin againſt knowledge it ſelfe.

1. In regard of our ſelves five wayes.

Firſt, when wee abuſe knowledge to help us to ſin: as firſt, to plot and contrive a ſin, as *Iudas* plotted to betray his Maſter, if he could *conveniently*; ſo the text ſayes, *Marke* 14. 11. hee would doe it wiſely: and thus thoſe that came to intrap Chriſt with moſt cunning *queſtions*, did ſin, and thoſe who plot againſt the juſt,

1. When we abuſe knowledg to help us to ſin, 3. wayes. 1. To plot and contrive ſin.

juſt, as *Pſal.* 37. 12.

2. To colour ſins committed by lies.

So ſecondly, when men uſe their wiſdomes to tell a cunning lie, to cover a ſin; as *Plato* ſayes, men of knowledge, *ſunt ad mendacia potentiores & ſapientiores:* whereas fooles, though they would lye, yet often tell truth ere they are aware.

3. To colour ſins by pretence of religion, and uſe their knowledg of religion to plead for and juſtifie their ſins.

But alſo thirdly, when they abuſe morall knowledge, which yet, as *Ariſtotle* ſayes, is leaſt apt to be (I am ſure ſhould leaſt be) abuſed, ſo as to make a ſhew of good pretences to cover their ſins, and diſſemble them; not only by finding out ſome cunning artificiall colour, as *David* did in the matter of *Vriah*—*Chance of war* (ſayes he) *fals to all alike:* but when men are ſo impudently hypocriticall,

pocriticall, as to make uſe of religious pretexts, (as the devill ſometimes doth) as *Saul*, who pretends to *Samuel*, *I have done the will of the Lord*: and when *Samuel* told him of the cattell, oh, ſayes he, *they are for a ſacrifice*; when God had expreſly commanded to kill them all. But this ſhift ſhifted him out of his Kingdom, *Samuel* pronounceth him a *rebell in it*, *Rebellion is ſinne againſt knowledge*, therefore hee knew it. Thus alſo *Iezabel* coloured over the ſtoning of *Naboth* with a ſolemne faſt. So *Iudas* fiſheth for money with a charitable pretence, *This might have been ſold, & given to the poore.* In ſins againſt knowledge, uſually the minde endea-

endeavours to finde out a colour, and that provokes God more than the ſin, becauſe we goe about to mock him. We ſee men cannot endure a ſhift, much leſſe the Al-knowing God, not to be mocked: and we ſee it is hard to convince ſuch an one. *David* was fain to bee brought to the racke, ere he would confeſſe, when he had a ſhift; and men doe ſeeke ſuch ſhifts only in caſe of ſinning againſt conſcience: for elſe there were no need, they would be ſure to plead ignorance, as *Abimelech* did.

2. When mē neglect to get knowledge that might preſerve them from finning, &c.

Secondly, when men neglect the getting and obtaining of *knowledge*, which knowledge might keepe and hinder them from ſinning, and might make them expert in

in duties. This is as much as to ſin againſt knowledge, although the ſins be committed out of ignorance : yet that ignorãce being through their owne default, it comes all to one : when it may bee ſaid of men, as the Apoſtle doth of the *Hebrewes*, *Chap.* 5. 12. *That for the time they have had to learne, they might have beene teachers; they had yet need be taught againe the firſt principles.* If a man had an Apprentice, who through negligence and want of heeding, and obſerving what he daily ſees and heares about his trade, might have got for his time much knowledge in his trade, whereby he might have ſaved his maſter much, which he now hath loſt him; and rid and perfected much worke,

worke, he daily ſpoyles him; ſuch careleſſe blockiſh ignorance it is juſt for his maſter to correct him for, and to charge on him all that waſte and loſſe, becauſe hee might have knowne how to have done better. And therefore even they who thought ignorance in it ſelf no ſin (wherein they erred) yet the neglect of knowledge upon this very ground, they thought a great ſin, and that it would be ſo far from excuſing ſinnes, as that it would aggravate them. So here we ſee theſe Gentiles ſhal not only be reckoned with for the actuall knowledge, they had attained to, and ſinned againſt; but alſo for what they might have had, and have picked out of the creatures. For ſo the Apoſtle brings in this here

here in the twentieth Verſe, that the power of God being clearly ſeen in the creatures, they neglecting to ſpell and reade it, ſo much knowledge as they might have got, GOD will reckon to them, and aggravate their ſinnes by.

3 Whē men refuſe knowledg that they may ſin more freely.

Thirdly, which is yet much worſe, when men refuſe knowledge, that they may ſinne the more freely; and doe ſtop the eare, leſt they ſhould bee charmed: As when men are loath, and afraid, and dare not reade ſuch a book as diſcovers, or might diſcover that truth to them, the ſubmiſſion to which would prejudice thē, and this to the end that they may plead ignorance of their ſin. Thus alſo thoſe that

that aſſent not to truth when it comes in ſtrongly upon them, but ſeeke to evade it. But 1 *Cor.* 14. 38. when the Apoſtle had clearely diſcovered the truth in thoſe things controverted, ſo as *who ever was ſpirituall*, or not fully blinde, might ſee, and would acknowledge the truth: then he ſhuts up his diſcourſe about them, ver. 27. *If any be ignorant, let him be ignorant:* for it is wilfull, *it is affected*; he ſpeakes it, as elſewhere, *Revel. ult.* it is ſaid, *He that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill:* that is, he that will bee unjuſt, and refuſeth to turne, let him goe on. This is a great ſin, for God, you ſee, gives ſuch a man over: one that is but neglectfull, or dull of capacity, God will

will take paines with him, to teach him, and beare with him, as Christ did with his Disciples: but if he be wilfully ignorant, he lets him dye in his ignorance, and yet will reckon with him, as if all his sins had been committed against knowledge, because he refused to know.

4. Is to hate the light, and to endeavour to extinguish it.

The fourth is to hate the light, and to endeavour to extinguish it. This is yet much worse, when men hate the Word, and the Ministers of it, the examples of Gods people, and the light they carry with them (they *shining as lights in a crooked generation*, *Phil.* 2. 15. and yet they hate these, as theeves doe a torch in the night, and flye against the light, as batts doe, and as the

Iewes did, *Iohn* 3. 20.) This *Chriſt* ſayes is the *great condemning* ſin of all others. So theſe Gentiles put *Socrates* to death for reproving them. And thus men ſin alſo, when they labour to extinguiſh the light in their owne conſciences, and *like not to retaine God in their knowledge, verſe* 28. but would ſtudy the art of forgetfulneſſe: When men have put the candle out, and drawne the curtaines, that they may ſin, and ſleepe in ſin more freely and ſecurely. Thus thoſe alſo ſin in a higher meaſure, who have had a cleare conviction, that they ought to be thus ſtrict, and ought to ſanctifie the Lords day, and pray privately, but now have loſt this light, and think they need

need not be ſo ſtrict: when men *continue not* in what they *were once aſſured of*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, 2 *Tim.* 3. 14. theſe ſinne againſt their knowledge, and are the worſt of ſuch ſinners: and this eſtate *Ariſtotle* himſelfe makes *ſtatum maligni, the ſtate of a wicked one, namely*, when the ſparks of light are extinguiſht or hated. For when any mans *light is* loſt and *turned into darkneſſe* by ſinning, then, as Chriſt ſayes, *how great is that darkneſſe?* When good lawes are not onely not enacted and embraced, but repealed alſo, (it is *Ariſtotles* ſimilitude, to diſtinguiſh an incontinent perſon, and a wicked man) this is

an high kinde of ſinning: So of theſe Gentiles it is ſaid, *their fooliſh heart was darkned*; they had extinguiſht ſome of that light God gave them. As ſome drinke away their wits, ſo ſome ſin away their conſciences; and thus by degrees, they firſt ſinne away the light of the word they had, as they in *Iude*, who were religious once, and then they quench even that little ſparke of nature that is left. Alſo verſe 10. *corrupting themſelves in what they know naturally.*

5. When mē hold opinions againſt their conſciences.

Fifthly, Men ſin againſt knowledge yet worſe, when they hold opinion againſt their knowledge. So many are ſaid to doe, in 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. hee foretels they ſhould ſpeake lyes in *Hypocriſie*, and invent

invent lyes that ſhould have a pretence of holineſſe; which they *know* to be a lye, or elſe they ſhould not be ſaid to ſpeake *lyes in hypocriſie*; but they doe it to maintaine their honour and greatneſſe, which muſt downe, if their doctrine prove falſe: and though many are given up *to beleeve* their lyes, 2 *Theſ.* 2. 11. as a puniſhment of their not *loving the truth*; yet others of them ſhall know they are lyes, and yet vent them for truths. Thus when men faſhion their opinion to the times and wayes of preferment, and their dependances on Great ones, or to maintaine and uphold a faction, or out of pride, having broached an error, maintain it, though the pulling out

that one tile doth untile all the houſe. Theſe are the two cauſes given of perverting the truth. 1 *Tim.* 6. 4,5. namely, *pride* and *covetouſneſſe*, and ſuppoſing *gaine godlineſſe*, and ſo faſhioning their religion accordingly: when men are *Knights* of the poſt, that will write or ſpeak any thing, wherby they may get gain and preferment.

2. Men ſin *directly againſt knowledge* it ſelfe in reſpect of *others*,

I. By concealing knowledg.

Secondly, men ſin againſt knowledge in regard of others.

Firſt, by concealing it: the Apoſtle indeed ſayes in a certaine caſe, *Haſt thou knowledge? keepe it to thy ſelfe.* He ſpeakes it of opinions, or practices about things indifferent, which might ſcandalize the weake; but if thou haſt knowledg, which

may

may edifie thy brother, thou oughteſt to communicate it. *Socrates*, knowing there was but one God, ſaid, in his Apology for his life, that if they would give him life, upon condition to keep that truth to himſelfe, and not to teach it to others, he would not accept life upon ſuch a condition: and I remember he expreſſeth his reſolution in words very nigh the ſame words the *Apoſtles* uſed, *Acts* 4.20. *Whether it bee better to obey God than men, judge you:* and, *wee cannot but teach the things we have heard and ſeene*, ſayes Chriſt; for knowledge is a thing will boyle within a man for vent, and cannot be impriſoned: It is light, and the end why light was

made, was to be ſet up to give light. And Chriſt argues from an apparent abſurdity to put a light under a buſhell, which may give light to all the houſe; Haſt thou knowledge of God and of his wayes? thou canſt not but ſpeake (if withall thou haſt but a good heart) to all in the family, to thy wife in thy boſome, &c. God took it for granted, that *Abraham* would teach his children what he ſhould know from him: The ſame diſpoſition is in all the children of *Abraham*.

2. Men endevour to ſuppreſſe knowledg in others.

Secondly, when men endeavour to ſuppreſſe knowledge. As the *Phariſees*, they *kept the keyes of it* in their hands, and would not open the treaſures of it themſelves,

themſelves, nor let others doe it neither. So they (*Acts* 4. 16.) *could not deny but a great miracle* was done by the Apoſtles (ſay themſelves) *but that it ſpread no further, let us threaten them, and charge them, that they ſpeake no more in his name.* And this they did againſt their conſciences by their owne profeſſion, *wee cannot deny it*: as if they had ſaid, if we could we would, but it was too manifeſt it was the truth. So when Maſters keep their ſervants from the meanes of knowledge, they are thus guilty.

3 When me go about to make others ſin againſt their conſciences. Iohn 9.

Thirdly, when we would make others ſin againſt their conſciences. The *Phariſees*, when the blinde man would not ſay as they ſaid, they

caſt him out; they would have had him ſay that *Chriſt was a ſinner*, when through the ſmall light he had, hee judged it evident enough, that a ſinner ſhould not doe ſuch a miracle, as was never done ſince the world began. And ſo *IeZabel* made the Judges, and witneſſes ſinne againſt conſcience in accuſing *Naboth*: and ſo ſome of the Gentiles, that would hold correſpondency with the Jewes, would have conſtrained the *Galathians* to be circumciſed, *Galat. 6. 12.* Thoſe that knew that circūciſion was to be aboliſht, yet they would perſwade them to it by a clubb argument, drawne from avoiding perſecution, not from evidence of the Truth, or by

reaſons

reaſons that might convince them, and their conſciences: therefore he ſayes, they *conſtrained them*. The perſwaders might indeed *glory*, as having their cauſe and ſide ſtrengthened, but they wanne little credit to their cauſe by it; for as the perſwaders arguments were ſuited to fleſh, ſo the others yeelding was out of fleſh, and *ſo they glory in your fleſh* and weakneſſe, ſayes hee; as the Papiſts urged *Cranmer*, not by arguments, but threates and promiſes, to recant; this is the greateſt cruelty in the world, to have a man murder himſelfe, ſtab his conſcience. To offend a weake conſcience is a ſinne, if but paſſively, when thou doſt ſomething

ſomething before his face, which his conſcience is againſt: but if thou makeſt him wound his owne conſcience, and to do an act himſelfe, which his owne conſcience is againſt, it is much worſe: as if thou beeſt a Maſter, and haſt a ſervant who pleadeth *conſcience*, that hee cannot lye for thy advantage in thy ſhop, or who will not doe unlawfull buſineſſes on the *Sabbath* day, and pleads conſcience, wilt thou ſmite him and whip him? *God will ſmite thee, thou whited wall.* How dareſt thou ſmite him, and ſo cauſe him to doe that for which God will whip him worſer? Shew mercy to thoſe under you, enforme their conſciences, wring them not, you may hap to breake

breake the wards if you doe.

Now for ſins committed *collaterally*, or *per modum circumſtantiæ* (that I may ſo expreſſe it) againſt knowledge, they are done either when particular acts of ſin are committed, and duties omitted, againſt light and knowledge; and ſo the Saints may and doe often ſin againſt knowledge. Or,

2. Generall Brãch: Sins committed collaterally or circumſtantially againſt knowledg. It is done, 1. Either in particular acts of ſinning, or 2. In continuing in an eſtate of ſinning againſt knowledg

Secondly, in regard of a knowne eſtate of ſin, and impenitency perſiſted in; when men continue, and goe on in ſuch a ſtate againſt conviction of conſcience, that ſuch is their eſtates.

For the firſt, becauſe particular acts of ſin committed againſt knowledge are infinite, and there will bee no end of inſtancing in particulars,

Particular inſtances being infinite.

A diſtinction is given concerning them.

lars, therefore I will not inſiſt: Onely in briefe this diſtinction concerning ſuch acts may be obſerved, and the obſervation of it may be uſefull: That ſome *acts* of ſins *againſt knowledge*, are meerely *tranſient*: that is, are done and ended at once. And though the guilt of them is eternall, yet the extent of the act is finiſhed with the committing it, and reacheth no further: as a vaine oath, breach of the Sabbath, &c. which acts cannot bee repealed, though they may be repented of. But others there are, which though the act may be but once outwardly and profeſſedly done, yet have an habituall and continued permanency, life, and ſubſiſtence given

1. Some ſinnes more tranſient.

given it, ſuch as that untill a man doth recall them, hee may bee ſaid continually to renew thoſe acts, and every day to be guilty of them, and to maintaine it, and ſo habitually to commit them. As it is with Lawes, which though made but once, are yet continued acts of the State, whileſt they ſtand in force unrepealed: ſo is it in ſome ſinnes. For inſtance, when a man doth take goods from his neighbour unjuſtly, the act indeed is done but once: but till hee reſtores them, hee may bee ſaid to ſteale them; every day, every houre, he continues to doe it habitually; So a man having ſubſcribed to falſhood, or recanted the truth publiquely, the

2. Some more permanent and continued, until recalled, though but once committed.

Which are of all other most dangerous to commit, when against knowledg

the act, though done but once, yet untill a retractation be some wayes made, hee continues that act, and so is daily anew guilty of it. So if a man should marry one, whom it is unlawfull for him to marry, (as *Herod* did) though that sinfull act of espousals, whereby they entred into it, was soone dispatcht; yet, till a divorce, he lives in a continuall sin. And such acts (of this latter sort I meane) against knowledge are most dangerous to commit; because to continue thus in them, though but once committed, hazards a mans estate; and therefore men finde, when they come to repent, the greatest snare, and trouble, and difficulty in such kinde of sins; to extricate

tricate themſelves out of them by a meet and true repentance.

But as concerning the firſt branch of this diſtinction, namely, of particular acts committed againſt knowledge; beſides this laſt diſtinction briefly touched; I will anon give you ſeverall aggravations & rules whereby to meaſure the ſinfulneſſe that is in ſuch acts ſo committed: but in the meane time the ſecond branch of this former diſtinction muſt be inſiſted upon, and therefore I will bring in theſe aggravations and rules which concerne particular acts, as diſtinct heads, after I have briefly ſpoken to this other, which is, That

2. Going on in a ſinfull eſtate againſt knowledg.

Secondly, thoſe ſin againſt know-

knowledge, who goe on in an eſtate of ſin and impenitency, which they know to be damnable: As *Pharaoh*, *Exod.* 9. 27. who confeſt that he and his people were wicked, and yet hardned himſelfe in ſin moſt dangerouſly: and yet three ſorts of men may apparently bee convinced thus to ſin.

Three ſorts of men thus ſin:

1. Such as for worldly ends forbeare to profeſſe Chriſt and his waies, which they know to be ſuch.

Firſt, thoſe that keep out, and with-draw themſelves from profeſſing Chriſt and his wayes, and the feare of his name, out of ſhame or feare of man, or loſſe of preferment, or the like worldly ends, when yet they are convinced that they are Gods wayes, and ought to be profeſſed by them. I doe not ſay, that all, who doe not come in to profeſſe Chriſt, and

and that doe not joyne themſelves with his people, that they goe on againſt knowledge; for many are ignorant, and miſtaken about thē: but when men are convinced of the truth, and neceſſity of profeſſing and *confeſsing* of it even *unto ſalvation*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, *Rom.* 10.) and yet out of feare, or ſhame, keep ſtill on the other ſide, drawing in their hornes altogether. Theſe go on in an eſtate of impenitency againſt knowledge; for put all theſe together, and it muſt needs appeare to be ſo: as Firſt, when they are convinced that this is the truth, and that ſalvation and the power of religion is onely to be found in ſuch wayes and men: and Secondly, that

that theſe are to be practiced and profeſſed, and yet Thirdly, out of ſhame, &c. keepe ſtill aloofe off, and goe on a contrary way; theſe muſt needs know, that they go on in an eſtate of impenitency againſt knowledge. This was the caſe of many of the *Phariſees*, who therefore ſinned highly: they beleeved, and were convinced, that Chriſt was the Meſſiah; and ſo then to be confeſt, and followed, and to be cleaved unto: and then alſo they muſt needs know, that his followers only were the *Children* of God: Yet *Iohn* 12. 42. it is ſaid, *though they* thus *beleeved on him*, yet they *durſt not confeſſe him for feare of the Iews*, and of the *Phariſees*, and of being *put out of the Synagogues.*

gogues. At the latter day, Christ shall not need to sever such from the rest, as he will doe the sheepe from the goats; for they willingly remain all their dayes amongst them, whom they know to be goats, and refuse the company, and fold, and food, and markes of the sheepe, which they know to be such: they may apologize, and make faire with the Saints, that their hearts are with them, but they will be rankt at the day of Judgement, as here they ranked themselves, *with the workers of iniquity.* Of these doth the Psalmist speake, *Those that turne aside by their crooked wayes, them shall the Lord leave with the workers of iniquity.* Psal. 125. ult.

Those

Thoſe alſo thus ſin, and are to be joyned with theſe, who know the tearmes and condition of ſalvation, and how they muſt part with all for Chriſt, and yet will not come to the price; ſuch do goe deſperately on againſt knowledge in a bad eſtate, and doe judge themſelves unworthy of eternall life. Thus the yong man in the Goſpell, he was told, that he was to ſell all, and that was the condition, and he knew heaven was worth it, and was convinced of the truth herein, that thus hee ought to doe, *for he went away ſorrowfull:* now if hee had not known that he went away without happineſſe, he needed not have beene ſorrowfull at all; but he knew the

the bargaine of ſalvation was not ſtruck up, and likewiſe what it ſtuck at, and yet ſtill reſted in his former condition, and choſe rather to enjoy his many poſſeſſions: This man now went on in his ſtate againſt knowledge.

2 Thoſe that deſer repentance.

Secondly, as alſo thoſe who upon the ſame or like ground defer their repentance, theſe goe on in a bad eſtate, and muſt needs know they doe ſo; for in that they promiſe to repent hereafter, and take up purpoſes to doe it, when they have gone on a little while longer, to adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt, they do therby profeſſe that there is a worke of grace, which they muſt attaine to, ere they can bee in the ſtate of grace: for they would not promiſe ſo

so much hereafter, but that they know not how, without such a worke, they should be saved. Whilest therefore such shall rest without present endeavouring after it, so long they are judged in themselves to be in a bad estate at present. When men know the curses due to their present estate, and yet say as he, *Deut. 29. 19. I will goe on in the way of my heart, and shall have peace* afterward. This man sins most highly, and therfore Gods wrath *smoaks against that man*, and he sayes of him, that *he will not bee mercifull to him*, in that place.

3. A postate professors goe on in an estate of sinning against knowledg

Thirdly, sunke and broken professors, such cannot but goe on in a bad estate against knowledge, when either

either men are falne from the practice and profeſſion of what is good, which once they thought neceſſary to ſalvation; or when they continue to hold forth their profeſſion in *Hypocriſie*. *Thoſe that have eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt*, but are returned to their vomit againe, ſome of theſe are ingenuous, and acknowledge both themſelves falne, and their preſent eſtate moſt miſerable, and yet goe on in it; and ſuch are to be pittyed, but yet are in a moſt dangerous condition. *Saul* when he was fallen away, yet had this ingenuity a while left, he deſired *Samuel* to pray to his God for him, & told *David*, that he was more righte-

ous than he; yet ſtill went on in his courſes, and in the end (as ſome have thought) ſinned againſt the *Holy Ghoſt*.

But others there are, who though they be fallen from all the inward, powerfull and ſecret performance of duties they once did practice, and from all conſcience of ſinning, yet retaine their profeſſion which they know to bee but an out-ſide: theſe of all others goe on againſt knowledge: and *Rev.*22.15. they are ſaid to *make a lye*; not only to *tell a lye* in words, but to *make a lie* in deeds. Now a lye is a ſin of all others moſt againſt knowledge, and indeed againſt a double knowledge, both *facti* and *juris*: and ſo is this. 1. That they

they profeſſe themſelves to be that they know they are not. 2. That they will not endeavour after that ſtate they know they ought to get into, if ever ſaved. This is the condition of many, who being convinced of the power of religion, have launched forth into a profeſſion, and hoyſt up ſayle, but now the tyde is fallen, the ſpirit withdrawn, the conſcience of ſin extinguiſht in them; yet for their credit ſake ſtill beare their ſails up as high as ever: even as many Merchants do, who are ſunk in their eſtates, ſtil beare a fair ſhew, yea will ſeem richer thã ordinary, by purchaſing lands, &c. Such a profeſſor was *Iudas*, he began ſeriouſly, & thought to have gone to heaven, and was

earneſt in good duties at firſt: as they alſo, 2 *Pet.* 2. 18. they *really*, or ὄντως, eſcaped the *pollutions* of the world, *through the knowledge of Chriſt*: but in the end *Iudas* became a *groſſe hypocrite*, one that pretended the poor, when he loved the bag; and on the ſudden betrayed his Maſter, when yet the Diſciples knew it not, ſuſpected *Iudas* as little as themſelves; and *the end* of thoſe alſo, in that fore-named place, is ſaid to be *worſe than their beginning*. Now becauſe ſuch ſin ſo highly againſt knowledge, therefore their puniſhment is made the *regula* of all other wicked mens; as when it is ſaid, *that other ſinners ſhall have their portion with Hypocrites*: as the wic-

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ked Angels puniſhment is made the meaſure of mens: *Goe ye curſed into the fire prepared for the devill and his Angels*: ſo among men, ſuch groſſe Hypocrites, their puniſhment is made the rule, and ſo the chiefe of all kinde of torments, which ſinners of the ſons of men ſhall undergoe.

Application. Now let me ſpeak a word to all ſuch as thus go on in a ſtate of impenitency againſt knowledge: this is a high kinde of ſinning, and of all the moſt deſperate, and doth argue more hardneſſe of heart, and *deſpiſing the riches of Gods goodneſſe*. For if, as in the *Rom.* 2. 4. to go on in ſin, when a man [*knows not*,] that is, conſiders not that *Gods mercy leads him to*

repentance, is made the ſigne and effect of a very hard heart, treaſuring up wrath, then much more, when thou knoweſt & conſidereſt thou art in an impenitent condition, and haſt many motions leading thee to repentance, is thy heart then to be accounted hard? When a man commits a particular act againſt knowledge, he haply and uſually ſtill thinkes his eſtate may be good, and that hee ſhall not loſe God utterly, or hazard the loſſe of him; only his ſpirit, being at preſent empty of communion with him, he ſteales out to ſome ſtolne pleaſure: but when a man knowes his eſtate bad, and that he is *without God in the world*, and yet goes on, he doth hereby caſt away the

the *Lord*, and profeſſeth hee cares not for him, or that communion which is to be had by him, as *Eſau* did his birth-right.

David, though hee deſpiſed the Lord, yet he did not caſt away the Lord, as *Saul* did: for *Saul* ventured utterly to loſe him, knowing his eſtate naught. *David*, when he ſinned, thought Gods eternall favour would ſtill continue, though for the preſent he might loſe the ſenſe of it. But when a man goes on in a ſtate of ſinning, he ventures the loſſe of Gods eternall love, & ſlights it, and knowes hee doth ſo: when a man knowes that he is *condemned already*, as being impenitent, and that all his eternall eſtate lies upon

the non-payment of ſuch duties of repentance, &c. and that the guilt of all his ſins will come in upon him, and that an execution is out, and yet goes on, this is more than to commit one act againſt knowledge, whereby hee thinkes he brings upon himſelfe but the guilt of that one ſin; and upon the committing of which, he thinkes not the morgage of all lyes, though it deſerves it; herein men ſhew themſelves more deſperate.

2. Head: *Rules* whereby to eſtimate ſinnes againſt knowledg. Of two ſorts: *Before* ſinning, or *in* ſinning.

In the next place, I come to thoſe *rules, whereby you may meaſure and eſtimate ſinning againſt knowledge*, in any particular act of ſinning; and they are either *before the ſin*, or *in ſinning*: *three* of either, which I make a ſecond

cond head, to explaine this doctrine by.

Firſt, *before.*

1. Before ſinning, 3. rules. 1. The more a man conſiders the iſſues and conſequents of a ſinne.

The firſt rule is, The more thou kneweſt, and didſt conſider the iſſues and conſequents of that ſin thou didſt commit, the more thou ſinneſt againſt conſcience in it: when as in *Rom.* 1. *ult. Thou knowing* (ſayes the *Apoſtle*) *that thoſe that commit ſuch things, are worthy of death:* that is, thou conſidereſt that *Hell* and *Damnation* is the iſſue and deſert of it, and *yet committeſt it*; yea and this when haply hell fire at the preſent flaſheth in thy face, and yet thou goeſt on to doe it, in this caſe men are ſaid *to chooſe death*, and *to love it*, *Prov.* 3. 36. When a man conſiders, *that the way* to the

whorehouſe *are the wayes to death* (as *Solomon* ſpeakes) So when thou a profeſſor conſidereſt with thy ſelfe before, This ſin will prove ſcandalous, & undo me, diſable me for ſervice, caſt me out of the hearts of good men, and yet doſt it. Thus that fooliſh King was told againe and againe, *Ier.* 38. 17, 18, 19. that if he would yeeld to the *King of Babel*, he ſhould ſave his life, and City, and Kingdome, and live there ſtill; but if he would not, he ſhould not eſcape: but as *Ieremy* told him, *verſe* 23. *Thou ſhalt cauſe this City to be burnt with fire*, yet he would not hearken: *This is the word of the Lord* (ſayes *Ieremie*,) and he knew it to be ſo; and yet being a weake Prince,

Prince, led by his Nobles, hee would not follow his Counſell: and thus *Iudas* fully knew the iſſue: Chriſt had ſaid again and againe, *Woe be to him by whom the Sonne of man is betrayed*, and yet went on to doe it.

2 Rule, The more conſultations and debates before.

The ſecond rule is, the the more conſultations, debates, and motives againſt it, did runne through thee before thou didſt it, ſo much the greater and more haynous. How often did mercy come in, and tell thee, that if thou lookeſt for any hope or part in it, thou ſhouldeſt not do ſuch an evill? how often came that in, *Shall I doe this and ſinne againſt God?* did any Scripture come in to

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testifie against thee in the nick? did God send in the remembrance of such a mercy past, to perswade thee; or some mercies to come, which thou dependest upon him for? That which made *Spira's* sin so great, was such debates as these before: and this made *Darius* sin, in casting *Daniel* into the Lions den, so great; he debated it with himselfe, *Dan.* 6. 14. he was sore displeased with himselfe, and laboured to the going downe of the Sun to deliver him; he considered that he was as his right hand in all the affaires of his Kingdome, and a man entrapped meerely for his conscience, and that to put him to death was to sacrifice him to their malice; hee knew him

him to be holy, and wiſe, worth all the men that ſought after his life, and yet yeelded; theſe conſiderations troubled him afore, and alſo after; inſomuch as hee could not ſleepe for them, *ver.* 18. Now becauſe that every ſuch conſultation ſhould ſet an impreſſion upon the heart, and countermand the motions of ſin, when therfore thou doſt it, maugre all ſuch debates and motives to the contrary, this is much againſt knowledge, and very heynous. Therefore the *Phariſees, Luke* 7. 30. are ſaid *to have rejected the counſell of God*, εἰς ἑαυτὸς, *in* or *againſt themſelves*: the words will beare either: *In themſelves*, becauſe they knew it, and tooke it into conſideration, and

and yet rejected it: and *againſt themſelvés*, becauſe it was their deſtruction.

3. Rule, The more teſtimonies and warnings againſt a ſinne.

The third rule is, that the more confirmations any man hath had of the knowledge of that which he ſinneth in, and teſtimonies againſt it, the greater ſin againſt knowledge it is: when a man hath had a cloud of witneſſes in his obſervation againſt a particular ſin, and yet doth it, and goes on in it, it is the more fearefull. To goe on againſt that one witneſſe, the bare light and grudging of naturall conſcience only, is not ſo much; but when it is further confirmed, and backed by the word written, which a man hath read, and with teſtimonies, out of which a man meetes with

with ſuch places, wherein againe and againe in reading of it, ſuch a practice is condemned, and obſerves it; and then alſo hears it reproved in Sermons, and of all ſins elſe, heares in private conference that ſin ſpoken againſt alſo; yea hath in his eye many examples of others ſinning in the like kinde, which have beene puniſhed, yea haply himſelf alſo; yet to ſin againſt all theſe is exceeding hainous. Sometimes God orders things ſo, as a ſinne is made a great ſinne, by ſuch forewarnings; ſo he cõtrived circumſtances that *Iudas* ſinned a great ſin; for *Iudas* knew before that *Chriſt* was the Saviour of the world; hee knew it by all the miracles he had ſeene, as alſo by his

his gracious words and converſe; and he profeſſed as much in following of him; and he had the written word againſt it, *Thou ſhalt not murder the innocent*. But yet further, God to aggravate his ſin to the higheſt, orders it ſo, that *Chriſt* ſhould tell him of it when hee was to goe about it, pronounceth a woe to him, *Iohn* 22. 22. that *it had been good for that man that he had never been borne*. *Mar.* 14. 21. and the Diſciples they were ſorrowfull at *Chriſts* ſpeech, when he ſuſpected one of them; and ſhewed an abomination and deteſtation of ſuch a fact, there was a Jury of eleven men, yea witneſſes againſt it; yea and *Iudas* againſt himſelfe, he asked *if it* were *he*; yea

yea and *Chriſt* gave him a ſop, and told him, *thou haſt ſaid it*, and *doe what thou doſt quickly*: which even then might argue to his conſcience, that he was God, and ſearched and knew his heart, and yet he went out and did it immediately. How did he ſin againſt the haire, as wee ſpeake, and how did all theſe circumſtances aggravate his ſin?

But yet a more cleare evidence of this is that inſtance of *Pilate*, whom God many wayes would have ſtopt in his ſin of condemning *Chriſt*, who examining him before the *Phariſees*, he could finde no fault with him, as concerning thoſe things whereof they accuſed him, *Luke* 23. 14. and yet to allay their malice,

malice, unjuſtly ſcourged him, *ver.* 16. And further, when hee ſent him to *Herod*, as being willing to rid his owne hands of him, *Herod* alſo found nothing worthy of death in him, *verſe* 15. which was another witneſſe might have confirmed him concerning Chriſts innocency. Yea yet further, that the fact might be more aggravated, a moſt notorious murtherers life muſt be put into the ſcale with *Chriſts*, and either the one or the other cõdemned: and when the people yet choſe *Barrabas*, why (ſayes *Pilate*) what evill hath he done? *ver.* 22. then he diſtinctly knew and conſidered that hee was delivered up through envy: Yea and whẽ he was upon the bench, and ready

ready to pronounce ſentence, as it were, God admoniſht him by his owne wife, *Mat.* 27.19. whom God himſelfe had admoniſhed in a dream, ſhee ſending him word ſhee had ſuffered *many things by reaſon of him that night, and therefore have nothing* (ſayes ſhe) *to doe with that juſt man:* yea he himſelf, when he condemnes him, waſheth his hands. And thus it falls out in many ſinful buſineſſes which men are about, that God often and many ſeverall wayes would knock them off, and ſtops them in their way, as he did *Balaam*; reproves them, as he did him by a dumbe Aſſe, 2 *Pet.* 2. 16. ſo there by ſome ſilent paſſage of providence, and not only ſo, but by his Spirit alſo

alſo ſtanding in their way, with the threatnings ready drawne and brandiſht againſt them, as the *Angell* did with a drawne ſword againſt *Balaam*, and yet they goe on; this is fearefull.

2. Rules to meaſure the ſinfulneſſe of ſuch acts *In* ſinning, 3.

There are 3. Rules alſo, whereby the ſinfulneſſe of ſin, as it is againſt knowledg, may be meaſured from what may be obſerved IN the act: as

I The leſſe paſſion or temptation to a ſin againſt knowledg.

Firſt, the leſſe paſſion, or inward violence or temptation to a ſinne committed againſt knowledge, the greater ſin againſt knowledge it is argued to be: For then the knowledge is the clearer, paſſion or temptation being as a miſt. But then to ſinne, when a man is not in paſſion, is to ſtumble at noon-day.

For

For as drunkenneſſe takes away reaſon, ſo doth paſſion (which is a ſhort drunkenneſſe) cloud and miſt a mans knowledge. And ſo *Ariſtotle* compares the knowledge of an *incontinent* perſon, to the knowledge of one that is drunke. When *Peter* denyed his Maſter, though he had warning of it before, and ſo it was againſt knowledge, and it was by lying, and ſwearing, and forſwearing, which are ſins of all other moſt directly againſt knowledge, yet he was taken unexpectedly; and when that which might ſtirre up feare to the utmoſt in him, was in his view; for hee was then in the Judgement Hall, where his Maſter, juſt before his face, was arraigned for his

his life; and he thought he might alſo have preſently bin brought to the bar with him, if he had been diſcovered to have been his Diſciple; ſo as his paſſion being up, his ſoul was diſtempered, reaſon had little time to recover it ſelfe; & therefore though it was againſt knowledg, yet the leſſe againſt knowledge, becauſe knowledg had *læſam operationem*, it had not its perfect work upon his heart: but now *Iudas*, in betraying his Maſter had not only warning before, but was not tẽpted to it, but went of *himſelfe*, & made the offer to the *Phariſees*, ſought how *cõveniẽtly* to do it, plotted to doit, had his wits about him, had time to thinke of it, and therefore it was (beſides the hainouſneſſe of the act) more

more alſo againſt knowledg, and ſo the greater. So *David* when he went to ſlay *Nabal*, was in hot blood, in a paſſion; but when he plotted to kill *Vriah*, he was in cold blood: hee was drunke when hee lay with *Bathſheba*, but ſober when hee made *Vriah* drunk: he went quietly & ſedately on in it. And therfore we finde *David* blamed only in the matter of *Vriah*, not ſo much for that of *Bathſheba*.

The more inward regreet, and ſorow, and reluctancy, the ſtronger is the knowledge, and ſo more againſt it.

Secondly, the more ſorrow, *reniſus*, or reluctancy, and regreeting of minde there is againſt a ſin, it is a ſigne that the knowledge of it is the ſtronger, and quicker againſt it, and ſo the ſin the more againſt knowledge: for that gain-ſaying and diſpleaſure of the minde againſt it, ariſeth from the ſtrength

and violent beating of the pulſe of *conſcience*, and oppoſition of it againſt the ſin, it ſprings from the greater and deeper apprehenſion of the evill of the ſin in the action, which is then in doing; and though that reluctancy be a better ſigne of the eſtate of the perſon, than if there were none at all; as there is not in thoſe who *are paſt feeling, and commit ſin with greedineſſe*; whoſe eſtate is therefore worſe, and more uncapable of repentance, yet the fact it ſelfe is argued to be the more haynous, for it argues it to be againſt ſtrong, active, ſtirring knowledge. This argued *Herods* ſin to be much againſt knowledge (as indeed it was) *Mark 6. 26.* the text ſayes, *he was exceeding*

ing ſorowfull : now that hee could not have been, unleſſe he had exceedingly apprehended what a great ſin it was to behead *Iohn*, who, *he knew, was a juſt and an holy man, ver.* 20. and who was one that had a great place in his eſtimation, *for he obſerved him*, and was wrought much upon by his miniſtery, and he knew that he did but ſacrifice him to the malice of a wicked woman; and in this caſe the ſin is alſo hereby made ſo much the greater, in that *Conſcience* doth ſtir up a contrary violent paſſion in the heart againſt the temptation, & therefore yet to do it, whē there is ſuch a bank caſt up that might reſiſt it, yet thē to break all down, ſuch a ſin waſts the conſcience much.

I Thirdly,

3. The more hardneſſe of heart in committing a ſin knowne to be a ſin, the greater the ſin, as it is a ſin againſt knowledg.

Thirdly, on the contrary, the more hardneſſe of heart there is, and want of tenderneſſe, in committing that ſin, which a man knowes to be a ſin, it is argued thereby to be the greater ſin againſt knowledg; not only *the greater ſin*, but *the greater ſinne againſt knowledge*. For hardneſſe of heart in ſinning, is an effect of having formerly ſinned much againſt knowledge before. For as the light of the Sunne hardneth clay, ſo the beames of knowledge & conſcience, lighting upon mens hearts, uſe to harden them, and doe make thé in the end *paſt feeling*. And therfore in 1 *Tim.* 4. 2. ſinning againſt knowledge is made the cauſe of a ſeared conſcience, *they ſpeake lies in Hypocriſie:* and therefore

fore knowingly that they are lyes, and such lyes as damne others as well as themselves, which who beleeve are damned, 2 *Thes.* 2. 11, 12. and if so, no wonder if it followes, *having their Consciences seared with an hot iron.* It is not a *cold iron* will seare their consciences, and make them insensible, but an *hot iron, a burning and a shining light*, which once having had place in their consciences, and being rejected, they begin to be hardned and seared. For knowledge makes sinnes and the apprehensions of them, familiar to a man, and so lesse terrible and frightfull in the end, as Beares and Lions doe become to their keepers through custome. *Judas* had a hard heart,

when he came to betray his Maſter, ſurely his conſcience had ſmitten him at firſt more for nimming out of the bag, than it did now for this of murder: He could never have had ſuch a hard heart, had he not had much knowledge: was it not a hard heart, that when he was challenged to his face, hee could ſet a brazen face on it, and did aske as well as the reſt, *Is it I?* when alſo Chriſt curſed him to his face, who ſhould doe it, and the Diſciples all abhorred it: had not *Iudas* lived under ſuch bleſſed and glorious meanes, and ſinned long againſt knowledge, all this would have ſtartled, and have ſtaggered him in his purpoſe: but he goes on as if it were nothing,

nothing, though when hee had done it, his conſcience was then opened too late; when a man formerly hath been troubled with a ſmall ſin, more than now with a groſſe lye, which he can digeſt better than once the other: or, when before, if he omitted praying, it troubled him, now he can goe a week without, and is not ſenſible of it, it is a ſigne that his knowledge hath hardened him.

Thus having given ſuch rules, whereby you may eſtimate the ſinfulneſſe of particular acts, I will now proceed to other wayes, aggravations taken from the kinde of knowledge a man ſinnes againſt, to ſin againſt what kinde of knowledge is moſt

3. Head. Aggravations drawne from the *kinde* of that knowledg we ſinne againſt, which are five.

hainous and dangerous; and theſe are *five*, drawne from the ſeverall qualifications of that knowledge, and the light which men ſin againſt. For the greater, or the more ſtrong and efficacious the light and knowledge is, the greater is the ſinne of knowledge thou committeſt; and this I make a *third* generall head to explaine this doctrine by. All theſe five rules being applicable and common both to particular acts againſt knowledge, and alſo lying in an eſtate of impenitency againſt knowledg, and all other particulars which have been mentioned.

The more ſtrong the knowledg the greater the ſin.

I To ſin againſt the inbred light of nature.

Firſt then, to ſin againſt the inbred light of nature, that is, in ſuch ſinnes, as though thou hadſt wanted the

the light of the word in, thou wouldſt have knowne to bee ſuch: This is a high kinde of ſinning. Such the Apoſtle ſpeakes of, *Iude* 10. *What things they know naturally, in theſe they corrupt themſelves, as bruit beaſts*, putting as it were no difference of actions, no more than beaſts, no not in what nature teacheth them, and therefore therein are as beaſts: for it is the light of nature puts the firſt difference betweene men and beaſts; & in ſuch kind of ſins the *Apoſtle* inſtanceth in this 1. *Chap.* as namely, that of *unnaturall uncleanneſſe*, in 3. particulars: as 1. *ſelf-uncleanneſs*, *v.* 24. ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, that is, alone *by thẽſelves*: ſo *Beza* & *Theophilact* underſtand it, which hee

makes there the firſt degree of unnaturall uncleanneſſe, which is therefore unnaturall, becauſe thou deſtroyeſt that which nature gave thee for propagation, *quod perdis homo eſt*. Then 2. the unclean love of boyes, *men burning in luſt with men*, *ver.* 27. be it diſcovered in what dalliance it will, though not ariſing to an act of Sodomie, *doing that which is unſeemely*, *ver.* 27. which he therefore ſayes, is the *perverting the uſe* and intent *of nature*, and ſo is a ſin againſt nature, *leaving the naturall uſe of women*. *My brethren, I am aſhamed to ſpeake of ſuch things as are done in ſecret*. Theſe kinde of ſins, by the Apoſtles ranking of them, are in a further degree of unnaturalneſſe, than

than any other, becauſe they are made the puniſhments of other ſinnes, which yet were againſt the light of nature alſo: namely, not *glorifying God* when they knew him: yet that being a ſin, the light of nature was not ſo cleare in compariſon of theſe, therefore theſe are made the puniſhments of the other, as being more againſt nature. So for men to be diſobedient to Parents, ſtubborne to them, and *without naturall affection*, as the Apoſtle ſayes, *ver.* 30, 31. this is againſt nature, even the inſtinct of it. So unthankfulneſſe, and requiting evill for good, is againſt a common principle in mens mindes. *Doe not the Gentiles doe good to thoſe that doe good to them?* your hearts uſe to

riſe againſt ſuch an one out of common humanity; or if you ſee one cruell and unmercifull, which is another, reckoned up *ver.*31. there being uſually principles of pitty in all mens natures, by nature; therefore for one man to prey upon, and tyrannize over another, as fiſhes do over the ſmall ones, as *Habakkuk* complaineth, this is againſt nature; which
Hab.1.14. teacheth *you to doe as you would be done to.* So *covenant-breakers*, and lying, and forſwearing, mentioned *ver.*30. *inventers of evill*, and *truce-breakers*, are ſins againſt nature, and naturall light; lying is againſt a double light, both morall; both *juris*, which tels us ſuch a thing ought not to bee done; and

facti,

facti, whilſt we affirm a thing that is not, the knowledge of the contrary ariſeth up in us againſt it, though there were no law forbade it; therefore of all ſins elſe, the devils luſts are expreſſed by two; *lying*, which is a ſin in the underſtanding, and *malice*, in the will, *Iohn* 8. 44.

2 To ſin againſt the light of education.

Secondly, to ſinne againſt that light which thou didſt ſuck in, when thou wert yong, to ſin againſt the *light of thy education*, this is an aggravation, and a great one. There is a *Catechiſme* of a bleſſed mother *Bathſheba*, which ſhee taught *Solomon* when a childe, put in among the records of ſacred Writ, *Pro.* 31. wherein ſhe counſels him betimes, *not to give his ſtrẽgth to women*; ſhe foretold him

him of that ſin: and becauſe it is incident to Kings moſt, they having all pleaſures at command, ſhe tels him particularly, *it deſtroyes Kings*: and ſo alſo *not to drinke wine*, was another inſtructiō there he was forewarned of: this aggravated *Solomons* fault the more; for reade the 2. Chapter of *Eccleſiaſtes*, and we ſhall finde there, that hee was moſt guilty in the inordinate love of theſe two; but he had not been brought up ſo, his good mother had not thus inſtructed him. And thus alſo when God would aggravate his owne peoples ſin unto them, he recalls them to their education in their youth in the wilderneſſe. So *Ierem.* 2. 2. *Goe and cry to them, I remember the*

the kindneſſe and towardlineſſe *of thy youth*: he puts them in minde of their education by *Moſes* their *Tutor*, and their forwardneſſe then. And ſo *Hoſ.* 12. *when he was a childe, I loved him*; and then God had *their firſt fruits ver.* 3. this he brings to aggravate their *back-ſliding*, *ver.* 5. Therefore the Apoſtle urgeth it as a ſtrong argument to *Timothy*, to go on to perſevere in grace and goodneſſe, *That he had known the Scriptures from a childe:* and therefore for him to fall, would be more haynous. The reaſon is, becauſe the light then infuſed, it is the firſt, a *virgin* light, as I may call it, which God in mercy vouchſafed to pre-poſſeſſe the minde with, before it ſhould

ſhould be deflowred and defiled with corrupt principles from the world; and did put it there to keep the mind chaſte and pure: and this alſo then, when the minde was moſt ſoft and tender, and ſo fitter to receive the deeper impreſſion from it. And hence ordinarily the light ſuckt in then, ſeaſons men ever after, whether it be for good, or for evill; it foreſtalls, and prejudgeth a man againſt other principles: and though a man comes to have more acquired knowledge and reaſons after put into him when he is come to perfect age, yet the ſmall light of his education, if it were to the contrary, doth bias him, and keepes him fixt and bent that way. So we ſee it is in opinions

opinions about Religion: the light then entertained, can never be diſputed out: ſo in mens waies and actions, *Traine up a childe in his way, and he will not depart from it. Prov.* 22. 6. To ſin therefore againſt it, and to put out the beames of it, or defile it, and to weare out the impreſſions of it, how wicked is it, and what a wretch art thou to doe ſo?

Many of you yong ſchollers have had a good *Bathſheba* that inſtructed you, not to poure out your ſtrength to drinke or women, but to pray privately, and to feare God, and love him; and when you come hither, you have good *Tutors* alſo, who teach you to pray; Miniſters, who inſtil bleſſed truths into you,

you, from which, one would thinke, you ſhould never depart; yet you doe.

Thinke how grievous this is; for if it is made an excuſe for many a man in ſinning, that it anſwers but his education; that hee never knew or ſaw better, as you ſay of many Papiſts; then muſt it needs on the contrary, be an aggravation of ſinfulneſſe. And as it was *Timothies* commendation, *that he knew the Scriptures from a childe*, ſo it will be thy condemnation, that thou knoweſt better from a childe, and yet rebelleſt againſt thy light.

3 The more reall and experimentall light men ſin againſt.

Thirdly, the more *reall* and *experimentall* the light is, men ſin againſt, ſtill the more ſin; as when they have learnt

learnt it from examples of godly men, whom they have lived amongſt, or the obſervations of Gods dealings with themſelves or others, and not only from the word notionally. To ſinne againſt ſuch light, this addes a further degree; not only to ſin againſt the bare light of nature, but alſo further, when nature hath beſides lighted her torch at the *Scripture*, and then when beyond all this, the reall examples and obſervations made of Gods dealings with a mans ſelfe and others, ſhall confirme all this, this makes a mans ſinfulneſſe much more grievous; for as *exempla efficacius docent quàm præcepta*, ſo the knowledge got by experiments of mercies or judgements,

ments is of more force and evidence. Knowledge learnt by experience, is the moſt efficacious. Therefore Chriſt himſelfe, who knew all things already, yet *learnt* (in the ſchoole of experience) *by what he ſuffered.* A little of ſome knowledge diſtilled out of a mans owne obſervation, is moſt precious, every drop of it; therefore the Apoſtle urgeth it on *Timothy*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 14. *Continue in the things thou haſt learned, and been aſſured of, knowing of whom thou haſt learned them.* There is a two-fold motive, and both emphaticall; Firſt, he was *aſſured* in himſelfe; and ſecondly, that which ſtrengthned that aſſurance, & was a meanes to worke it, was the example of the holy Apoſtle,

Apoſtle, and of his own Parents, *Knowing of whom thou haſt learned it*: And ſo *ver.* 10. the Apoſtle againe urgeth his owne example, *Thou haſt fully knowne my doctrine and maner of life*; and then alſo brings to his minde the education of thoſe his godly Parents, who inſtructed him. Hence alſo, *Eſay* 26. 10. it is made an aggravation, that *in the land of uprightneſſe men deale unjuſtly*. Thus light drawne from the obſervation of Gods judgements upon others, it much aggravates: it is laid to *Belſhazzars* charge, *Dan.* 5. 22. *Thou knoweſt all this, how God dealt with thy father Nebuchadonozer.* So ſome of you come here, and live in a religious ſociety, and

and ſee ſometimes one, ſomtimes another of thy Colleagues turne to Chriſt, yea haply Chamber-fellow converted from his evill courſes, and yet thou goeſt on, this is ſinning againſt a great light.

4. The more ſhining the light is in the conſcience joyned with a taſte, the greater the ſin.

Fourthly, the more vigorous, ſtrong, powerfull the light is that is in thee, and more *ſtirring* in thy heart, and joyned with a taſte, the greater the ſins committed againſt it are to be accounted. The more thou haſt taſted the bitterneſſe of ſinne, and Gods wrath, and haſt beene ſtung with it as with a *Cockatrice*, the more thou haſt taſted Gods goodneſs in prayer, and in the ordinances, the more of ſuch a knowledge, and yet ſinneſt the worſe.

worſe. In the 5. of *Iohn*, 35. *Chriſt* aggravates the *Iewes* unbeliefe in himſelfe, and their preſent hardneſſe, that *Iohn* was to them, not only a *ſhining*, but alſo a *burning light*; that is, they had ſuch knowledge engendred by his miniſtery, as wrought joy and heat, as well as light; therefore it is added, *they rejoyced therein for a ſeaſon.* And thus their fall, *Heb. 6.* is aggravated, that it was ſuch a light as had taſting with it. For to explaine this, you muſt know, that between *ordinary notionall light*, or that aſſenting to ſpirituall truths which is common with men, from traditionall knowledge living in the Church, that between it and true ſaving light, or *the light*

of

of life, there is a middle kinde of light, which is more than the common conviction men have, and leſſe than ſaving light: it is a light which leaves alſo ſome impreſſion on the affections, makes them feele the *powers of heaven and hell*, and bee affected with them. Now the more of ſuch light againſt a ſin, be it drunkenneſſe, or uncleanneſs, or oppreſſion, and yet falleſt to it againe, the worſe. For this is a further degree added to knowledge, and not common to all wicked men. And therefore as thoſe *Iews*, who had not onely common meanes of knowledge, but *miracles* alſo, and yet *beleeved not*, *Iohn* 12. 17. ſhall be more condemned; ſo thoſe who have ſuch taſting

taſting knowledge ſet on by the holy Ghoſt (which is as much as if a miracle were wrought, for it is above nature, a *ſupernaturall* worke of the *Spirit.*) And therefore to ſin againſt ſuch light, and ſuch only, is that which makes a man in the next degree of fitneſſe to ſin againſt the *Holy Ghoſt.*

5. To ſin againſt profeſſed knowledg.

Fifthly, to ſin againſt profeſſed knowledge, is an aggravation alſo, and an heavy one. To ſin againſt a mans owne principles which hee teacheth others, or reproves or cenſureth in others. *Titus* 1. laſt, *Thoſe that profeſſe they know God, and yet deny him,* theſe are *moſt abominable* of all others: For theſe are lyars, and ſo ſinne againſt knowledge as lyars doe, in the

the 1 *Iohn* 2. 4. ſuch an one is called a *lyar* in a double reſpect, both in that hee ſayes he hath that knowledge hee hath not, it not being true; and becauſe alſo hee denies that in deed, which hee affirmes in word, this is ſcandalous ſinning. So *Rom.* 2. 24. the *Iewes boaſting of the law*, and of *having the forme of knowledge* in their braines, cauſed the *Gentiles to blaſpheme*, when they ſaw they lived cleane contrary thereunto: and therefore a brother that walkes inordinately, was to bee delivered to *Satan, to learne what it was to blaſpheme*, 1 *Tim.* 2. 20. That is, to learne to know how evill and bitter a thing it is, by the torments of an evill conſcience, to live in ſuch a courſe,

courſe, as made God and his wayes evill ſpoken of, as it befell *David* when he thus ſinned. Yea 2 *Cor.* 5. 10, 11. though they might keepe company with a heathen, becauſe he was ignorant, and profeſſed not the knowledge of God; *yet if a brother*, one that profeſſed, and ſo was to walke by the ſame rules, did ſin againſt thoſe principles he profeſſed, then *keepe him not company*: Thus did *Saul* ſin. All the Religion he had and pretended too in his latter dayes, was *perſecuting witches*: yet in the end hee went againſt this his principle; he went to a witch in his great extremity at laſt. And thus God will deale with all that are hollow, and ſin ſecretly againſt know-

ledge, in the end. He suffers them to goe against their most professed principles.

These are aggravations in generall, applicable both to any act of sinning, or going on in a known state of sinning.

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USE.

NOw the uſe of all that hath been ſpoken, what is it, but to move all thoſe that have knowledge, to take heed, more heed of ſinning than other men? and thoſe of them that remaine in their naturall eſtate, to turne ſpeedily and effectually unto God? For if ſinning againſt knowledge be ſo great an aggravation of ſinning, then of all engagements to repentance, knowledge is the greateſt.

Howgreat an engagement & motive it is to men of knowledge to turne to God, and to take heed of ſinning.

1. Such an one cannot sin so cheap as others: their sins are more costly and chargeable,

First, thou who hast knowledge, canst not sinne so cheape as another, who is ignorant: Therefore if thou wilt bee wicked, thy wickednesse will cost thee ten times more than it would another. Places of much knowledge, and plentifull in the meanes of grace, are deare places to live in sin in. To be drunke, and uncleane, after enlightning, and the motions of the Spirit, and powerfull Sermons, is more than twenty times afore; thou mightest have committed ten to one, and beene damned lesse. This is condemnation (sayes Christ) *that light came into the world*: Neither canst thou have so much pleasure in thy sin as an ignorant person. For

and will have lesse pleasure in sinning.

the

the conſcience puts forth a ſting in the act, when thou haſt knowledge, and does ſubject thee to bondage and the feare of death. When a man knowes how dearely he muſt pay for it, there is an expectation of judgement embittereth all. Therefore the *Gentiles* ſinned with more pleaſure than wee. Therefore *Epheſ.* 4. 18, 19. the *Apoſtle* ſpeaking of them, ſayes, that through *their ignorance*, and darkneſſe, and *want of feeling*, they committed ſin *with greedineſſe*, and ſo with more pleaſure; they not having knowledge or hearts ſenſible of the evils that attend upon their courſes.

2. Such are given up to greater hardneſſe of heart.

Secondly, thou wilt in ſinning againſt knowledge

be given up to greater *hardneſſe. If the light that is in thee be darkneſs* (ſayes Chriſt) *how great is that darkneſſe?* therefore the more light a man hath, and yet goes on in workes of darkneſſe, the more darkneſſe that man will be left unto, even to a reprobate minde in the end.

3. Such God gives up to the worſt and groſſeſt of ſins

Thirdly, it will procure thee to bee given up to the worſt of ſins, more than another man; for God when he leaves men, makes one ſin the puniſhment of another, and reſerves the worſt for ſinners againſt knowledge. Theſe *Gentiles*, when *they knew God, they worſhipped him not*, *God gave them up to the worſt of ſins*, whereof they were capable, as *unnaturall unclean-*

uncleanneſſe, &c. But theſe are not ſins great enough for thee, that art a ſinner of the Chriſtians; to be given up to drunkenneſſe, or adultery, &c. otherwiſe than to diſcover thy rottenneſſe, theſe are too ſmall ſins; but thou ſhalt be given up to *inward profaneneſſe of heart*, (as *Eſau* was, having beene brought up in a good family) ſo as not to *neglect* holy duties only, but to *deſpiſe* them; to deſpiſe the good word of God, and his Saints, and to hate godlineſſe and the appearance of it; thou ſhalt bee given up to contemne God and his judgements, to *trample under foote the blood of the covenant*, or elſe unto devilliſh opinions; thoſe other

are too ſmall to be puniſhments of thy ſinne: For ſtill the end of ſuch an one muſt be *ſeven times worſe than the beginning*, as *Chriſt* ſayes it ſhall; if thou wert a drunkard, a ſwearer, or an unclean perſon before, and thy knowledge wrought ſome alteration in thee, thou ſhalt not haply be ſo now at thy fall, but ſeven times worſe; profane, injurious to Saints, a blaſphemer, or derider of Gods wayes and ordinances.

4. At death, knowledg ſinned againſt, gives up to more horror and deſpaire.

Fourthly, when thou commeſt to lay hold on mercy at death, thy knowledge will give thee up to more deſpaire, than another man. Knowledge, though when it is but newly revealed, it is an help; yet not made uſe of, turnes againſt the ſoule, to

to wound it, and to worke deſpaire; and this both becauſe we have ſinned againſt the meanes that ſhould have ſaved us, as alſo becauſe ſuch as ſin againſt knowledge, ſin with more preſumption; and the more preſumption in thy life, the more deſpaire thou art apt to fall into at death. Therefore *Eſay* 59. 11, 12. what brought ſuch trouble, and *roarings like Beares* upon theſe Jewes? and that when ſalvation was looked for, that yet it was ſo far off from them, in their apprehenſions? *our iniquities* (ſay they) *teſtifie to our face, and we know them.* Now then ſinnes teſtifie to our face, when our conſcience tooke notice of them, even to our faces, when wee were

were committing them; and then alſo the ſame ſins themſelves will againe teſtifie to our faces, when wee have recourſe for the pardon of them. Therefore thou wilt lye roaring on thy death bed, and that thou *knoweſt them*, will come as an argument, that thou ſhalt not have mercy. As ignorance is a plea for mercy, *I did it ignorantly, therefore I obtained mercy*; ſo *I did it knowingly*, will come in as a bar and a plea againſt thee, therefore I ſhall not have mercy.

5. In Hell it increaſeth torment.

Fifthly, both here and in *Hell*, it is the greateſt executioner and tormentor. In this ſenſe it may be ſaid, *Qui auget ſcientiam, auget dolorem*: He that increaſeth knowledge

ledge, increaſeth ſorow, as *Solomon* ſpeakes : for knowledge enlargeth our apprehenſion of our guilt, and that brings more feare and torment. *Have they no knowledge, who eate up my people ? Yes, there is their feare* (ſayes *David.*) Therefore *Heb.* 10.28. after ſinning after knowledg, there *remaines* not onely a more *fearefull puniſhment*, but a more *fearefull expectation* in the parties conſciences. And this is the *worme in hell*, that gnawes for ever. Light breeds theſe wormes.

But then you will ſay, it is beſt for us to be ignorant, and to keep our ſelves ſo.

I anſwer, no : For to *refuſe knowledge* will damne as much as abuſing it. This you may ſee in *Prov.* 1. 23.

Ye

Yee fooles (ſayes wiſdome) *you that hate knowledge, Turne, and I will poure my ſpirit upon you, and make knowne my words to you.* Well, ver. 24. *they refuſed*, and would none of his reproofe: Therefore ſayes God, *I will laugh at your calamity*: that is, I will have no pitty, but inſtead of pitty, God will laugh at you; *and when your feare comes, I will not anſwer, becauſe ye hated knowledge*, *ver.* 29. ſo as this is as bad. There remaines therefore no middle way of refuge, to extricate thy ſelfe at, and avoid all this, no remedy but turning unto God: otherwiſe thou canſt not but bee more miſerable than other men; yea and this muſt be done ſpeedily alſo: For thou

thou having knowledge, God is quicker in denying thee grace, and in giving thee up to a reprobate mind, than another man, who is ignorant. He will waite upon another that knowes not his will and wayes, twenty, thirty, forty yeares, as hee did upon the children of the *Israelites* that were borne in the wilderneſſe, and had not ſeene his wonders in *Egypt*, and at the red ſea: but thoſe that had, he ſoone ſware against many of them, *that they ſhould never enter into his reſt*. *Chriſt* comes as a *ſwift witneſſe* againſt thoſe to whom the *Goſpell* is preached, (*Mal.* 3. 5. he makes quick diſpatch of the treaty of grace with them. Therefore few that have knowledge

ledge are converted when they are old, or that lived long under the meanes. And therefore you that have knowledge, are engaged to repent, and to turne to God; and to bring your hearts to your knowledge, and that speedily also, or else your damnation will not onely be more intolerable than others, but the *sentence* of it passe out more quickly against you. Therefore as Christ sayes, *Iohn* 12.36. *Whilest you have the light, walke in it*: For that day of *Grace*, which is very cleare and bright, is usually a *short one*. And though men may live many naturall dayes after, and enjoy the common light of the Sunne, yet the day of grace

grace, and of gracious excitements to repent, may be but a short one.

FINIS.

Bd 12034

Aggravation
OF
SINNING
AGAINST
MERCIE:

By exaggerating the *Riches* of common *Mercies* men sin against.

BY
THO: GOODVVIN, *B.D.*

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As riches, credit, friends, comfort in them all.

AGGRAVATIONS OF SINNING AGAINST MERCIE.

ROM. 2. 4, 5.

Or despisest thou the riches of his goodnes, & forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?

But after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy selfe wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God?

THis is the last and most weighty aggravation which the Apostle puts into the mea-

ſure of the Gentiles ſinfulneſſe (which in the former Chapter he had, *verſe* 29. pronounced *full* before) to make it fuller yet: *Their ſinning againſt mercies*, and deſpiſing the riches of Gods goodneſſe, patience, and forbearance, the hatefull evill and iniquity whereof, can be better no way ſet off and illuſtrated unto mens conſciences, than by a diſplay of the riches of that goodneſſe which men ſin againſt. My purpoſe therefore is to unlock and carry you into that more common treaſury of outward mercies, and lead you through the ſeverall roomes thereof, all which doe continually *leade* you *unto repentance*: That then reflecting

reflecting upon our ungrate-
full waſte, and abuſe of ſo
many mercies in ſinning,
thereby our ſins, every ſinne,
the leaſt, may yet appeare
more ſinfull unto us, *who are*
leſſe than the leaſt of all thoſe
mercies. Know then, that
beſides that peculiar treaſure
of *unſearchable riches of grace* Ephe. 2.7.
laid up in Chriſt (the offer of
which neglected and deſpi-
ſed, addes yet to all that ſin-
fulneſſe, a guilt as far exceed-
ing all that which ſhall bee
ſpoken of, as Heaven exceeds
the Earth) There is another
untold Mine of *Riches the*
Earth is full of, as the *Pſal-* Pſ. 104. 24.
miſt tels us, and the Apoſtle
here, which theſe Gentiles
only heard of, and which
wee partake of all as much

as they. As there are *riches of grace* offered to you which can never bee exhauſted; ſo there are *riches of patience* ſpent upon you, which you will have ſpent out in the end; the expence of which, caſt up, will alone amount to an immenſe treaſure, both of guilt in you, and of wrath in God, as theſe words informe us.

To helpe you in this account, I will

1. In generall, ſhew what *Goodneſſe*, or Bounty, *Patience*, and *long-ſuffering* are in God.

2. That there are *riches* of theſe ſpent upon all the ſons of men.

3. That theſe all *lead men to repentance*. And then

4. I

4. I will expoſtulate with you, and aggravate your ſinfulneſſe, in going on to *deſpiſe* all theſe by unrepentance, as the Apoſtle here doth.

Firſt, in that God is ſaid here to be *Good*, or Bountifull : 2. Patient, or *forbearing* : 3. *Long-ſuffering*, they ſeeme to note out three degrees of his common mercies unto men.

Firſt, hee is a *good*, or a *bountifull* God : for ſo, as goodneſſe is here uſed, I exegetically expound it : For though it be true, that *goodneſſe* and *bounty* may differ ; yet when *riches of goodneſſe* are ſaid to be communicated, it imports the ſame, and is all one with *Bounty* ; And ſuch is God. And all thoſe noble

noble and royall qualifications and properties which concurre to make one truly *good*, and *bountifull*, do meet and abound in him, in all thoſe good things which he doth beſtow; and are found truly in none but in him: ſo that it may be truly ſaid, that *there is none good but God*, as Chriſt ſayes of him.

Now *Bounty*, in the generall, which is in God, may be thus deſcribed:

It is a free, willing, and a large giving of what is meerely his owne, looking for no recompenſe againe.

To explaine this, that you may ſee, that all theſe conditions are required to true goodneſſe, and all of them to be found in God only.

1. He

1. He that is *Bountifull*, he muſt be a *Giver*, and Beſtower of *good* things: and all he beſtowes, it muſt be by way of *gift*, not by way of *recompence* unto, or by deſert from the party he beſtowes all on: Therefore Chriſt ſayes, *Luk. 6. 33.* that *to doe good to thoſe who* have done, or *doe good to us, is not thank-worthy*, nor is it *Bounty*. But God is therefore truly *good*, becauſe hee ſimply, meerely, and abſolutely *gives* away all which he beſtowes: For hee was not, nor can any way become beholden to any of his creatures; nor had formerly received any thing from them, which might move him hereunto; ſo *Romanes* 11. 35. *Who hath*

Luk. 6. 33.

Rom. 11. 35.

onely [*of him*] but [*through him*] *Rom.* 11. 36. that is, they cannot ſtand nor ſubſiſt without him. Even Kings, (the greateſt and moſt bountifull of men) their bounty is but as that of the clouds, which though they ſhowre downe plentifully, yet they firſt received all from the Earth below them.

3. He muſt give *largely*, it is not Bounty elſe. Now *God* is therefore ſaid to be *rich in goodneſſe*, becauſe he is *abundant* in it. So we finde, comparing *Pſal.* 33. 5. with *Pſal.* 104. 24. in which it is ſaid, that *the earth is full of his goodneſſe*, and *his riches*; which wee may judge of, by what hee ſayes in the 27. verſe of that 104. *Pſal.*

of

of what an houſe he keepes, and what multitudes hee feeds : *All theſe* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *wait on thee, that thou maiſt give them meate, and thou openeſt thy hand, and they are filled with good.* King *Ahaſuerus*, to ſhew his bounty, made a Feaſt to his chiefe Subjects, but it was but for halfe a yeare, and not to all : ſome few halfe yeares more would well nigh have beggerd him ; but God doth thus continually. The greateſt and moſt bountifull of men, when they would expreſſe the largeſt of their bounty, ſpeake but of *giving halfe of their Kingdomes*, (ſo *Herod*, and he did but talk ſo too) But *God* beſtowes whole *worlds*, and *Kingdoms*, as

as *Daniel* ſpeakes, *Dan.* 4. 35. and *gives them to whom he pleaſe.*

4. Hee that is *bountifull*, muſt give all he gives *freely*, and *willingly*. Which, though I put together, yet may imply two diſtinct things: As firſt, that he that gives, muſt be a *free agent* in it, who is at his choice, whether hee would give any thing away or no. The *Sunne* doth much good to the world, it affords a large light, and even halfe the world at once is full of its glory: yea and all this light is its owne, not borrowed, as that of the Moon and Stars is; yet this *Sunne* cannot be called *good* or *bountifull*, becauſe it ſends forth this light *neceſſarily*, and

and *naturally*; and cannot chooſe but doe ſo; nor can it draw in its beames. But *God* is a free giver, he was at his choice, whether hee would have made the world or no; and can yet when he pleaſeth, *with-draw his Spirit and face, and then they all periſh*, *Pſal.* 104. 29. Secondly, it muſt be *willingly* alſo: that is, no way conſtrained, nor by extraction wrung from him, who is to be called *Bountifull*. A *willing minde* in matter of bounty, is more *accepted* than the thing, 2 *Cor.* 8. 12. Now of God it is ſaid, *Dan.* 4. 22. that he *gives* the Kingdomes of the world *to whom he will*, and none *ſwayes* him, or *can ſtay his hand*, *ver.* 35. yea he gives

Pſ. 104. 29.

gives all away with *delight*. So *Pſal.* 104. 31. having ſpoken of feeding every living thing, and of other the like works of his goodneſſe, throughout that Pſalme, hee concludes with this, *God rejoyceth in all his workes*: that is, doth all the good hee doth to his creatures with delight; It doth him good (as it were) to ſee the poore creatures feed.

Laſt of all, *looking for no recompence* for the time to come. This is another requiſite in *Bounty*. Sayes Chriſt, *Luke* 6. 34. *If you give to receive againe, as ſinners doe*, this is not *thankeworthy*: but ver. 35. ſo doth not *your heavenly Father*: For (ſayes he) *Doe good, and hope for*

Luk. 6.34.

for nothing againe, ſo ſhall you be like your Father, and then you ſhall ſhew your ſelves true *children of the* [*moſt High.*] In which word, hee inſinuates a reaſon why God gives all thus: becauſe he is ſo great, and ſo High a God, as nothing we doe can reach him; as *David* ſpeakes, *Pſal.* 16. 2. *My goodneſſe extends not unto thee:* he is too high to receive any benefit by what we doe. And even that thankfulneſſe he exacts, he requires it but as an *acknowledgement of our duty, and for our good*, *Deut.* 10. 12. Pſal. 16. 2.

And ſo much for the firſt, namely, what *goodneſſe* and *bounty* is: and how *God* is truly *good*, and he *onely* ſo. But this attribute of his, and

and the effects of it, he exerciſeth towards all our fellow creatures, and did to *Adam* in Paradiſe. But now to *ward* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) namely the ſons of *men*, now fallen, he extendeth and manifeſts a further *riches*, namely, of *patience* and *long-ſuffering*, which the *devils* partake not of, the good Angels and other creatures that ſinned not, are uncapable of.

Luk. 6.35. For as Chriſt ſayes, *Luke* 6. 35. In what he beſtowes on us, *he is kinde* to ſuch, as are *evill and unthankfull*. *Mercy* is more than *goodneſſe*, for *mercy* alwayes doth reſpect *miſery* : and becauſe all the creatures are *ſubject* to a *miſery*, *Rom.* 8. 20, 21, 22. *bondage and vanity*, therefor

hi

his *tender mercies are over all his workes.* But yet *patience* is a further thing than *mercy*, (as *mercy* is than *goodnesse*) being exercised, not towards *miserable* creatures only, but towards *sinners*, and includes in it more three things further towards them.

1. Not onely that those persons hee doth good unto doe offend, and injure him; but that himselfe also is exceeding sensible of all those wrongs, and moved by them, and also provoked to wrath thereby; it is not patience else. So in the 2 of *Pet.* 3. 9. It is not *slackenesse* (sayes he there:) *God is not slack:* that is, he sits not in heaven as one of the Idoll gods, that regarded not what

what acts were kept here below; or tooke not to heart mens cariages towards him; but is *long-ſuffering*, or *patient*; that is, he apprehends himſelfe wronged, is fully ſenſible of it; *is angry with the wicked every day*, *Pſal.* 7. 11. Hee hath much adoe to forbeare, even when he doth forbeare & letteth thē alone; he exerciſeth an attribute, a vertue towards them, namely, *patience*, in keeping in of his anger; which is as to *keep fire* in ones boſome.

Pſal.7.11.

But ſecondly, this is not all; he doth not ſimply forbeare, and reſtraine his anger, but vouchſafeth that *time* he forbeares them in, that they might *repent* in it; and his *mercies*, as meanes

leading

leading to repentance. So it followes in that 2 *Pet.* 3.9. *But God is long-ſuffering to us-ward*, and his long-ſuffering hath this in it, *not willing that any ſhould periſh, but come unto repentance.* So alſo *Revel.* 2. 21. it is called *ſpace to repent.* And all the bleſſings he vouchſafeth, he gives them as meanes and guides to *leade them on to repentance*, as here. And *Mat.* 18. 29. Have *patience* with me, and I will *pay* thee all. That is, give me a longer day and ſpace to pay the debt in, and bee willing to accept it when I bring it, and let mee lie out of priſon, that I may be enabled to pay it.

Revel.2.21

Mat.18.29

Thirdly there is yet a further thing in his *patience*, namely,

a *waiting*, and expectation that men would come in, and *repent*. So *Luke* 13.17. *Theſe three yeares have I* [*come ſeeking*] *fruit*, *but have found none*: There was an expectation, a longing, a deſire, it would bring forth fruit, *Oh when ſhall it once be*, ſayes God, *Ier.* 13. laſt?

Luk.13.17

In the laſt place, that other attribute of *long-ſuffering*, which is the third, is but as a further degree of *patience*; *but patience lengthened out farther*, that is, when *God* hath been thus *patient*, hath forborne and waited for their comming in, and that not for *three yeares*, but haply *thirty*, *forty* yeares, and ſtill they turne not; his patience then beginnes (as we

we would thinke) to be (as it were) worne out, and his anger begins to ariſe, as if he could forbeare no longer; (as it was towards that tree, *Why cumbereth it the ground? Cut it downe*) yet he goes on to ſpare a man another yeare, and many more yeares ſtill after that; and *endureth with much long-ſuffering* (as *Rom. 9. 22.*) *the veſſels of wrath*, endures to wonderment, above meaſure, beyond all expectation, all patience, as it were; this is *long-ſuffering*.

The ſecond generall head is, that there are [*riches*] of this his *goodneſſe*, &c. expended on us.

It is a *rich* goodneſſe, patience and long-ſuffering:

Rich in *themſelves*, in regard of their *abundance*, as they came from him: and *rich* alſo in regard of their *precious uſefulneſſe unto us*, as they may bee improved by us.

Firſt, *in themſelves* they are *rich*: if wee conſider what is expended, all that while, Hee layes out, not ſimply his *power* to ſuſtaine and uphold all things, and to maintaine us freely: ſo to doe is nothing to him. For whilſt hee doth but ſo, nothing goes out of purſe, or is detracted from him; (as I may ſo ſpeake) hee feeles not the expence either of power, providence, &c. All this coſts him but words: For he *upholds all, creates all by*

Heb. 1.

the

the word of his power, Heb. 1. And thus to maintaine the Angels, and to have maintained all mankinde before they fell, had been no more. But (my brethren) when now hee maintaines us ſinners, not ſimply *power* goes forth from him, but his *glory* is expended, and taken from him, and for the while waſted, detracted from; he loſeth, at preſent, every day infinitely by us, and hee is ſenſible of it; every ſinne takes glory from him, *robs* him, as he himſelfe complaines: that he *who made the world, upholds it*, keepes it together, as the hoopes do the barrell, it would fall to pieces elſe, to nothing; *in whom all live*, as fiſhes in the

Sea, yea upon whom all live) that He ſhould live *unknown*, unthought of, unſerved; yea diſgraced, diſhonoured in the world, and have this world loſt to him, as it were; and ſin, the devill, wicked men, to have all the glory from him, to be exalted, to carry the whole world afore them: This ſpends upon him, he had need of Riches to doe this.

Iohn 1.10.

Secondly, conſider the multitude of ſinners, that thus ſpend, and live upon theſe riches, no leſſe than all the world: He had need of multitudes of patience in him: He forbeares not one, but all and every one. Wee looke upon one man, and ſeeing him very wicked, we wonder

wonder God cuts him not off; we wonder at our ſelves, that God did not cut us off before this, when once our eyes are opened: nay then caſt your eyes over all the world, and ſtand amazed at Gods forbearance towards it. Take the richeſt man that ever was, to have millions of men in his debt, it would undoe him ſoone. All the world are in Gods debt, and run ſtill in debt every day more and more, and yet hee breakes not, nay breakes not them.

Nay thirdly, to manifeſt this abundance yet more, conſider not onely the multitude hee forbeares, but the time he hath done it:

to forbeare much, and to forbeare it long: hee hath forborn, & been out of purſe from the beginning of the world, ſince men were upon the face of the earth, five thouſand yeares and a halfe already; and how long it is yet to the day of judgement, we know not: And yet yee ſee, He is as *patient*, and as *bountifull* now in the latter dayes of the world, as hee was at the firſt. Did that greateſt Convert that ever was, that had not lived paſt thirty yeares in his ſinfull eſtate (for he was yong when he held the ſtoners clothes that ſtoned *Steven*) and *yet was the chiefeſt of ſinners*, did he yet (as himſelfe ſayes) thinke himſelfe *a patterne of long-*

long-ſuffering, 1 *Tim.* 1. 16. thought it a great matter God ſhould forbeare ſo long? what is the whole world then? if hee, being but one ſmall poore veſſell, was ſo richly laden with the riches of Gods patience, how is this great bark of the world then fraught, that hath gone over ſo vaſt a gulf of time? how much of theſe his riches have beene laden in it? 1 Tim. 1. 16.

And then fourthly, adde to this the expenſive prodigality of all theſe ſinners in all ages; every ſinner ſpends ſomething, and how laviſh are men of oaths? *All the thoughts of mens hearts from their youth up, they are evill, and onely evill, and continu-*

ally : and how much then hath every man ſpent him? every ſin is a debt.

In the ſecond place, this is a *rich* goodneſſe and patience in regard of the *preciouſneſſe* and *uſefulneſſe*.

Firſt, *precious*, in regard of what all theſe manifeſtations of his goodneſſe and forbearance coſt, even the blood of his Son, *who as a Lord hath bought and purchaſed all wicked men*; their lives, and their reprivall, all that time that here they live; and all the bleſſings and diſpenſations of goodneſſe, which here they doe enjoy. Chriſts mediation ſo farre prevailes with God for all the world, that it puts a ſtop to the preſent proceedings of

2 Pet. 3. 1.

of justice, which otherwise had said of all, *that day thou sinnest, thou dyest.* So that as Christ may bee called the *wisdome* and the *power* of God; so also the *patience* and the *long-suffering* of God. For, for his sake, and through his meanes, it is exercised: God would not shew a drop of mercy, but for his Son. Which, I take, strongly and clearely intimated, in that dealing of his, with the Jewes, (*Exod.* 23. 20. compared with *Exod.* 33. 2, 3, 4, &c. Immediately after God had given the Law, (by the rules and threatnings whereof, God the Father in his government was to proceed) and after they had transgressed it, He there declares,

declares, that he could not *goe with them : For* (according to the rules of his government) *hee ſhould deſtroy them; but his Angell, hee would ſend with them*, even Chriſt, he might ſhew them mercy, for he was the purchaſer of it: and that hee was that Angell, appeares, in that God tells them, *ver.* 21. *that his name was in him*, who alſo would deſtroy them, if they turned not and repented, according to the rules of his Law, the Goſpell.

And *precious*, ſecondly, *to us*, in regard of the *uſefulneſſe*, this goodneſſe and long-ſuffering tend and ſerve unto. This makes this ſtock of time afforded you, by Gods goodneſſe, to be riches indeed,

Rev. 2. 21.

indeed, that *it is ſpace to repent*; not a time of reprivall only, but to get a pardon in; and this makes all the good things we enjoy to be precious indeed, that they are meanes, *leading us* by the hand to *repentance*. *Rich* it is, becauſe if your time bee laid out as it ought, you may obtaine thoſe far ſurpaſſing *riches of glory* reſerved for hereafter; Win, and gaine Chriſt by it, and all his *unſearchable riches*. All things receive their worth and valuation from what they tend to, and from what depends upon them, and the uſe they might be put to. A *Bond*, a *mans will*, which in it ſelfe (as it is a piece of parchment) is not worth one ſhilling;

ling; yet an eſtate of many thouſands may lie and depend upon them. And ſo time, is not ſimply precious in it ſelfe, but in regard of the opportunities of it. And accordingly, in thoſe ordinary paſſages of our lives, do we, more or leſſe, eſtimate and count time precious, as the buſineſſe allotted to it, is of more or leſſe cõſequence: when a matter fals out that concernes us, and requires diſpatch, and we are caſt into ſtraits of time about it, we count every minute precious: ſo this *time* of ours (which is the chiefe and principall of that ſtock, put into our hands by Gods patience) being *ſpace to repent in*, to gain and trade for heaven with,

with, in this reſpect every minute of it, is as much as heaven is worth, and one houre of it may bee as much as all the time you are to ſpend for ever, after this life ended: every minute hath an influence into eternity. And how ever you may account it, yet the ballance of the Sanctuary thus eſtimates your time, cals it *your money*: *why lay you out your money for what is not, &c?* (*i. e.*) this precious day of grace, and the thoughts, cares and endevours which are brought forth and minted in this time allotted) theſe are your money, you might purchaſe heaven by. And thus it hath been eſteemed by holy and godly men, who yet had leſſe need

Eſay 55. 2.

need to value it, having done the maine buſineſſe it was allotted for. *David* in the 39. *Pſalme* 13. being brought very low, *Oh ſpare me a little, that I may recover my ſtrength, before I goe hence, and be ſeene no more.* So *Hezekiah, Eſay* 38. how did he ſue for, and when he had obtained fifteen yeares, how did he bleſſe God? ver. 20. or if by this you judge not ſo, thinke with thy ſelfe, what at the day of death thou wouldſt account of an houre, of a moneth, a yeare? what others, who have laine gaſping, would have given a world for time againe, (as I have heard one crying day and night (*call time againe*) or if not then, oh what in hel!

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The third thing I am to ſhew, is, that all this *goodneſſe*, *patience*, and *forbearance*, is afforded towards you as a meanes, and helps to bring you to repentance. *Acts* 17. 26, 27, 28. *God* (ſayes the Apoſtle there) *hath allotted* to men, both their *times* to live in, and alſo their places of abode and *habitations*, all richly furniſhed with bleſſings to uphold their lives and beings. And to what end are both theſe thus afforded? That they *might ſeeke the Lord*, *if by groping after him* (even as men in the darke) *they might haply finde him.* But men being in the darke, and deſtitute of guides to bring them unto God, may yet be as far off

Acts 17. 26,27,28.

of finding him as ever. Therefore adde but the words of my text, to what the Apoſtle ſayes there, and we ſee, that this goodneſſe of God takes us by the hand, and *leads us to repentance*; to turne from ſin unto God, and ſo to finde him. And thus lead are you unto God, by the helpe of three ſeverall guides, which each after other ſweetly leade you, and point you out to this.

Firſt, all this goodneſſe beares witneſſe to your hearts of a gracious hand that extends it ſelfe in all theſe; therefore in that 17. of the *Acts*, he ſubjoynes, *God is not far off any of us.* That there is a good God beſtowes all things on you, is

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a thought lies at next doore of all his bleſſings, not farre off. Yea *they all* (ſayes the Apoſtle to the ſame Gentiles, *Acts* 14. 16.) *doe beare witneſſe of him*, (though they *went on in their owne wayes*) *yet* (ſayes he there) *God left not himſelfe without witneſſe*; that is, an impreſſion on their hearts that his good hand beſtowed all on them, when *he filled their hearts with food and gladneſſe.* Acts 14.16

Secondly, His goodneſſe having brought thus God to mens thoughts, then your owne conſciences take you, and leade you downe into your ſelves, and beare witneſſe, that you by walking in your owne wayes, doe nothing but provoke and offend

offend this good God. So Rom. 2. 15.

And then thirdly, there is an indelible principle common to all men to *love thoſe who love them*; which after the two former have brought you hitherto, point you to *Repentance*, as the concluſion. [*Shall we goe on to ſin againſt this good, ſo good? returne evill for good?*] Is not this a naturall neceſſary conſequent out of all theſe, to ſay as they, *Let us therefore feare the Lord, who giveth us the early and the latter raine*, as it is *Ier.* 5. 26, 27? And though men are ſaid not *to know this*, in the text, yet the meaning is, they doe not throughly and effectually conſider thus much, ſo as there-

Luke 6.

Ier. 5. 26, 27.

thereby to bee brought to Repentance, yet however there is such a witnesse of all this in all mens hearts, and thus are they led on unto Repentance, would they see their way and follow their guide.

The use shall bee an use of expostulation (as here the Apostle caries it) with men sinfull and impenitent, for going on to sinne against all this mercy; together with an aggravation of their sinfulnesse hereby. Men, if yong, doe usually take the advantage of this their precious time, (which out of so much longsuffering is vouchsafed them) and of all those precious opportunities, and blessings they enjoy, to improve

prove them only, in reaping and gathering in to themſelves the pleaſures of ſinne; making the time of youth their harveſt of ſinning, and yet thinke to eſcape by repenting, afterwards: and then when old, after they have already enjoyed a long and a faire Sunſhine day to turne to God in, and to have ſown much ſeed to the Spirit, the comfort wherof they might now have reaped; yet as they have altogether neglected ſo to do all their youth, ſo they goe on to do ſo ſtill, whilſt they ſee they have any day left, be it never ſo neare the ſetting; and doe chooſe rather deſperately, to venture their eſtate in the world to come, upon the

the riches of his mercy pardoning, (though without all care and endevour to change their hearts or lives) upon the experience they have had of the riches of his mercy forbearing them in this world, thinking to finde him the ſame in both. With all ſuch, let mee reaſon a little, and from the *riches of Gods goodneſſe, patience, &c.* ſpent upon them, at once expoſtulate with them, for their impenitency, and aggravate to them their ſinfulneſſe, and alſo, if poſſible, prevaile with them to goe on to deſpiſe it thus no longer. And if there bee any principle of common ingenuity, any ſparke (I doe not ſay of grace, but of goodneſſe of

of nature) left unextinguiſht, mee thinkes it ſhould affect you, and doe ſome good on you ere I have done.

And to that end, conſider a little, and compare together Gods loving kindneſſes towards you, and your unkinde dealings towards him.

To begin at the very beginning of thy being: how much riches of goodneſſe were there laid and buried in thy foundation? when the firſt corner ſtone was laid, when thou wert made a man, (beſides the coſt which hath been ſpent upon this building ſince) and, curſed as thou art, even that very foundation was laid in bloody *iniquities*, in which thou wert *conceived*; and the very

very materials of ſoule and body, thou conſiſteſt of, being tempered with ſin, *like the ſtone in the wall, and beam out of the timber*, cry out every moment to God againſt thee, as *Edom* did, *Raſe it, raſe it, even to the very ground.* Hab.2.10, 11. Pſal.137.7

Conſider how but the other day thou wert meere nothing, and when an infinite number that never were nor ſhall be, were in as great a poſſibility of being as thou, (for when he made this world, he could have laid it aſide wholly, and created millions of other worlds) yet hee choſe thee to have a roome in this, but one world, (for hee meanes to make no more) and this world could

have ſtood without thee, and did before thou wert, and ſhall doe when thou art gone: yet he called thee forth out of nothing, and by his Almighty power, bade thee ſtand forth when there was no need of thee. I ſay, he choſe thee to have a being: for as there is an election of things that are, to ſalvation, ſo out of things that were not, unto being. And wretch that thou art, if thou repenteſt not, thou deſtroyeſt what God hath made, and hadſt better have kept nothing ſtill, and never have peept out, or elſe to skulk into thy firſt nothing againe, for thou art *loſt, better never to have been borne.*

Secondly, Conſider yet more

more *goodneſſe*. Thou mightest have been admitted into the loweſt forme of creatures, have been a worme, a flea, a flye, which wee men fillip and cruſh to death at pleaſure: but to bee made a *Man*, created one of the States, Barons, Lords of the world the firſt houre, admitted into the higheſt order, crowned a King in the wombe, as *David* ſayes of man, *Pſal.* 8. 5. *made a little lower than the Angels*, but *crowned* with glory & honor; *made to have dominion over all the workes of his hands*. The one halfe of thee is more worth than a whole world, [thy ſoule] as Chriſt ſayes, that wēt to the price of ſouls; upō wch God hath beſtowed

Pſal. 8. 5.

an eternity of being, and made it the picture of his face, his Image, when other creatures doe weare but his footſteps. And thy body the other peece, and indeed but the *Caſe*, the *Sheath*, (as *Daniels* phraſe, and the Chaldee hath it, *Dan.*7.15.) *of thee*, what a curious workmanſhip is it? *wonderfully and fearefully made*, as *David* ſayes, *Pſal.* 139. 15. *curiouſly wrought in the lower parts of the earth*: So there hee calls the wombe; becauſe as curious workmen, when they have ſome choice piece in hand, perfect it in private, and then bring it forth to light for men to gaze at: So God out of a teare, a drop, he hath limmed out the Epitome

Pſ.139.15.

tome of the whole world; the Index of all the creatures. *Sun, moone, ſtars, are to be* found in thee. And yet wretch as thou art, thou art withall the Epitome of hell, and broughteſt into the world with thee the ſeeds and principles of all the villanies that have been acted in the world, and if thou repenteſt not, thou hadſt better have been a toad, or ſerpent, the hatefulleſt of creatures; and wouldeſt change thy condition with them one day. Eccl. 12. 2.

Thirdly, being a man, haſt thou all thy members that belong unto a man? it is becauſe *he wrote them all in his booke, Pſal.* 139. 16. if he had left out an eye in his

common-place booke, thou hadſt wanted it; is not that a mercy? aske the blinde. If thou hadſt wanted thoſe windowes to looke out at, thy body would have beene a dungeon, the world a priſon. If a Tongue (*which is thy glory*) or an eare, thou hadſt lived among men, as a beaſt among men. And yet when God gave thee all theſe, what did hee but put weapons into an enemies hand? for haſt thou not uſed all theſe, *as weapons of unrighteouſneſſe?* Inſomuch as *the tongue*, but *one member*, is called *a world of iniquity* by the Apoſtle; and if thou repenteſt not, thou hadſt better (as Chriſt ſayes) have entred into the world without

Rom. 6.

out an eye, an eare, a tongue, than with theſe goe for ever into hell.

Fourthly, when thou wert taken out of the wombe, (where thou didſt remaine, but whileſt thou wert a framing) what a ſtately palace hath hee brought thee into, [the world] which thou findeſt prepared, and ready furniſht with all things for thy maintenance, as *Canaan* was to the Children of Iſrael; a ſtately houſe thou buildedſt not, trees thou plãtedſt not, a rich Canopy ſpangled, ſpread as a Curtain over thy head; he ſets up a Taper for thee to worke by [the Sunne] *till thou art weary*, *Pſal.* 104. 23. and then it goes down without

Pſ. 104. 23

thy bidding, for *it knows its going downe*, *ver.* 19. and then he drawes a curtaine over halfe the world, that men may go to reſt, *thou cauſeſt darkneſſe, and it is night*, *ver.* 20. An houſe this world is, ſo curiouſly contrived, that to every roome of it, even to every poore village, ſprings doe come as pipes to finde thee water. So *Pſal.* 104. 10,11. The pavement of which houſe thou treadeſt on, brings forth thy food, *ver.* 14. *Bread for ſtrength, wine to cheere thy heart, oyle to make thy face to ſhine*, *ver.* 15. Which three are there ſynecdochically put for all things needfull to ſtrength, ornament, and delight. The very *chambers* of

Pſal. 104. 10,11.

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that houſe (as *Davids* calls them) *drop fatneſſe*, and water the earth, *ver.* 13. Hee wheeles the heavens about, and ſo ſpins out time for thee, every moment of which time brings forth ſome bleſſing or other, and no one is barren. Therefore *Pſal.* 65. 11. *The yeare is ſaid to be crowned with goodneſſe:* a diadem of goodneſſe encircles it round: and yet thou haſt filled this world thou thus art brought into, with nothing but rebellions, as he hath done with bleſſings, and haſt piled up ſins to heaven; and thou haſt preſſed all theſe armies of bleſſings thou findeſt the world filled with, to fight againſt their Maker, under

Pſal.65.11

the devils banner, whom thy wickedneſſe ſets up as the *god of this world*. And as the yeare is crowned with goodneſſe, ſo thy yeares with wickedneſſe, and no moment is barren; *but all thy imaginations are evill continually*. Yea thou haſt ſinned *againſt heaven and earth*, and *ſubjected the whole creation unto vanity*, laden the earth, and filled it ſo with wickedneſſe, that *it groanes*, the axeltree of it is even ready to crack under thee, and the *ground* thou treadeſt on to *ſpue thee out*.

Fifthly, ſince thou cameſt into the world, what a long time hath God ſuffered thee to live in it? hee hath not ſpared thee *three yeares* onely,

onely, (as he did the fig-tree) but *thirty*, *forty*. And when thou firſt madeſt bold to thruſt forth thy trayterous head into the world, Death (which thy ſinne brought into the world with it) might have arreſted thee, and told thee, this world was no place for thee, for hell is only *our own place*, *Act.* 1.25. thou ſhouldſt have beene executed the firſt day. And is not ſo much time of eaſe from puniſhment infinite mercy? Caſt but your thoughts upon the Angels that fell, that have beene in hell from the firſt moment of their ſinning, do but think with your ſelves what they would give to have ſo much time, cut out of that eternity, they are

Acts 1.25.

are to run through, and to have it ſet apart for eaſe, and to be void of torment; if the rich man in hell, made it ſuch a great ſuit, and counted it ſo great a favour to have but one drop of water (which could but for a little while (ſcarce more than a moment) have cooled and eaſed, not his whole body, but the tip of his tongue only) how much more would he have thought it mercy, to have lived ſo many yeares againe as hee had done free from torment? what is it then for thee, to live ſo many yeares free from the falling of the leaſt drop of that wrath, whereof the full vials ſhould have beene poured out many yeares agoe? The

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ſame Law was out againſt us, which was out againſt the Angels; *That day thou eateſt, thou ſhalt dye the death:* what put the difference? the Apoſtle tels us, his *long-ſuffering to us-ward*: not to them: for in *Chap.* 2. 4. he had told us that he *ſpared* not the *Angels which fell*, but poſted, and threw them into hell, as ſoone as they had ſinned. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Sixthly, But further, in the 6. place; Is this all? hath it beene barely a time of eaſe given thee, a time of reprivall? No, it hath been more, *ſpace to repent*, and ſo to obtaine thy pardon in, *Rev.* 2. 21. And as it hath been more than eaſe of torment unto thee, ſo alſo conſider

ſider it hath been more than ſlackneſſe in him that hath afforded it to thee, as the Apoſtle there doth tell us. It is not that he hath tooke no notice of thy offending him, but he is ſenſible of every idle thought, of every oath, vaine word, and as the Scripture tels us, *he is pained at the very heart*, in ſo much as *hee repents* that ever hee made thee; he *is angry with thee every day* thou riſeſt, every time he lookes on thee, when ever he meets thee going into the Taverne to bee drunke, the whorehouſe to be uncleane, when he meetes thee reeling in the ſtreets, he hath much adoe to forbeare killing thee, as he had to forbeare *Moſes* when he met him

Gen. 6.

him in the Inne: He is ready to have a blow at thee, and it ſhould not need bee any great ſtroake, or fetching his arme about; if hee did but blow on thee, thou wert conſumed. To ſuffer thee to live, doth therefore coſt him much riches of patience: but to cut thee off, need coſt him nothing: hee can doe that with eaſe. But further, all is joyned with a *willingneſſe* that thou ſhouldſt *repent*, and *not periſh*, as that place tells thee. It were much mercy for a Traytor to be reprived, to have a leaſe of his life for twenty yeares, though there were no hope nor meanes of obtaining his finall pardon after that time ſpent, and this alſo, though but

but for one treaſon, and though all that time of his reprivall hee caries and behaves himſelfe never ſo obediently. But unto thee, this time hath beene more than a longer day of life, and putting off the execution (which for the guilt of that firſt rebellion ſhould have beene acted on thee in the womb) it hath been *time to repent in:* And yet, hath not this time of thy reprivall made thee ſo much the more rebellious? and haſt not thou ſpent all this time in making up the meaſure of thine iniquity full? and hath it beene willingneſſe onely in God that thou ſhouldſt not periſh? yea, more, joyned with waiting alſo, when it ſhould once

once bee, thinking the time long, as longing and desiring that thou wouldest repent, that hee might pardon thee. Thus *Ierem.* 13. last, God expresseth himselfe, *when shall it once be?* yea and consider how many dayes of payment have been set, and how many promises made, and broken all by thee, and yet still he waiteth unto wonderment. Thou receivedst presse money at thy Baptisme, when thou didst promise to forsake the devill and all his workes, and to begin to serve him, when thou shouldst begin to discerne betweene good and evill. But no sooner did the light of knowledge dawne in thy heart, but thou beganst

ganſt to fight againſt him; and thy firſt thoughts to this day have been only and continually evill. And then (haply) in thy yonger yeares, before thou hadſt taſted of the pleaſures of ſin, he gave thee an inkling, by meanes of thy education, of his goodneſſe towards thee, and of that happineſſe to be had in him, and thou hadſt the firſt offer of him, ere thy tender yeares were poyſoned by the world; and hee hath dealt with thee againe and againe, both by his Word and Spirit; not *waited* onely, but *wooed* thee, and hath beene a ſuiter to thy heart long: and I appeale to your hearts, how many promiſes you have made him,

him, of turning from all your rebellions to him, after ſuch a Sermon, which was brought powerfully home: in ſuch a ſickneſſe, and in ſuch a ſtrait, thy conſcience knowes full well: And ſtill God hath made tryall of thee, and given thee longer day; and though thou haſt broke with him againe and againe, yet hee hath forborne thee againe and againe, and hath waited this twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, ſixty yeares, when thou ſhouldeſt come in, and be as good as thy word, and ſtil thou haſt failed him. And yet behold and wonder, and ſtand cõfounded at the riches of his long-ſuffering, that after ſo many yeares expence, and

and promiſes broken by thee, expectations failed in him, and many mockeries of him, after all this he is yet willing to accept of the remainder, if thou wouldſt *ſpend the reſt of the time, left thee in the fleſh, according to his will*, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, 1 *Pet.* 4. 3. even to loſe principall, uſe, and all, for what is paſt, and requires but the ſame compoſition was propounded the firſt day; yea and not onely ſo, but with promiſe to become a debtor unto thee, to beſtow further riches on thee than ever yet thou ſaweſt, or art able to conceive: yea and all this, when he could have his penyworths out of thee another way, and loſe not

1 Pet. 4. 3.

not one farthing by thee, but by puniſhing thee in hell, recover all *to the utmoſt*.

Neither, ſeventhly, hath it beene barely and ſimply an act of *patience* and *forbearance*, though joyned with this willingneſſe, thou ſhouldſt not periſh; or meerely a permiſſive act of ſuffering thee to live. But God ſhewes forth yet more riches of goodneſſe joyned with this long-ſuffering; *in him ye live, and move, and have your being*; and doſt thou live in him onely? nay thou liveſt on him alſo, upon his coſt and charges; *I have hung upon thee* (ſayes *David*) *from my mothers wombe*. And conſider what thy life is, that of ſo ſmall a bottome, he

he ſhould ſpin out ſo long a thred ! had hee not drawne it out of his owne power, as the ſpider doth her web out of her owne bowels, it had beene at an end the ſecond minute; to maintaine that *radicall moiſture*, that *oyle* that feeds the lampe, and light of thy life, that *radicale balſamũ*, that is as great a miracle as the maintaining the *oyle in the cruze* of the poore famiſhed widow. And further yet, hath he maintained thee only? Nay more, hath he not defended thee, tooke thy part, protected thee, tooke thee under his wing, as the hen doth her chickens, to ſhelter thee from thoſe many dangers thy life hath beene expoſed unto? Other-

Otherwiſe, how many waies, ere this, hadſt thou beene ſnatcht away out of the land of the living? Is thy caſe, the caſe of the *figtree* only, which before we mentioned, that when God cryed, *Cut it downe*, another cryed, *ſpare it?* but there have been many have cryed, *Cut thee down*, and God hath cryed, *ſpare Thee*: there is never a minute, but the devill would have had a blow at thy life, as he longed to have had at *Iobs*. That thou, a poore lumpe of fleſh, ſhouldeſt walke through, and in the midſt of ſuch an hoſt of fierce and cruell enemies, whoſe hearts are ſwelled with malice at thee, and God ſhould ſay to them all, con-

concerning thee, as he did to *Laban* concerning *Iacob*, *Touch not this man.* And yet if thou wert not liable to their malice and power, yet conſider how many dangers and caſualties, beſides, thou haſt been kept in, and from; as falls, drowning, killing many wayes; how often have the arrowes of death come whisking by thee, tooke away thoſe next thee, (haply of thy kindred, brother, ſiſter, yoke-fellow, of the ſame houſe, family with thy ſelfe). and yet have miſſed thee? And if we looke no farther than theſe dayes of mortality we have lived in; two great plagues in this Kingdome, how have the moſt of us all here ſurvived

and

and now the third is increasing and growing upon us? To have our lives in such *deare yeares* oftime, when to *have our life for a prey* is mercy enough, as *Ieremy* told *Baruch*! that these arrowes should flye round about us, over our heads, and misse us! that Gods arrests should seize upon men, walking, talking with us, and spare us! how often, many other wayes, hath thy neck beene upon the block, and the axe held over, and yet hath fallen besides! To goe no farther than thy own body, the humours thereof, if God should not restraine them, would overflow and drowne it, as the waters would the earth, if God

ſhould not ſay to them, *ſtay your proud waves.* And when in a ſickneſſe they have been let out, yet God hath kept a ſluce, that ſo much ſhould breake forth, and no more, which ſhould purge, and waſh the body, and make it more healthfull, as the overflowing of *Nilus* doth. And when then thy body hath been brought low and weak, and like a crazy rotten ſhip in a ſtorme, taking in water on all ſides, ſo that all the Phyſitians in the world could not have ſtopt thoſe Leakes; yet he hath rebuked wind and ſea, hath careened, mended thee, and launched thee into the world againe, as whole, as ſound, and ſtrong as ever; and God hath

hath ſaid, as *Iob* 33. that *Thou ſhouldſt not dye.* In a word, if thou conſider but what thy life is, and the dangers it is ſubject to, thou wilt acknowledge it as great a wonder to preſerve it, as to ſee a glaſſe, that hath beene in continuall uſe, gone through many hands, and hath had many knocks, and falls, to bee kept for forty, fifty, ſixty yeeres whole and unbroken: God hath carryed *thy life in his hand*, as it were a candle in a paper lanthorne in a ſtrong windy night, and kept it from being extinct, when as wee often ſee in many, that a little cold comes but in at a little cranny, and *blowes their Candle out*, as *Iob* ſpeaks. Iob 33.

And eighthly, how have theſe yeares and houres of thy time been filled up with goodneſſe? and with how many comforts? For a Traitor to live, though but upon bread and water all his daies, what favour is it? and ſo hadſt thou lived all this time, never ſo miſerably, though *all thy dayes thou hadſt eaten thy bread in darkneſſe, and hadſt had much ſorow with thy ſickneſſe*, (as *Solomon* ſpeaks.) Some there are, who, as *Iob* ſpeakes, *Iob* 21. 25. *die in the bitterneſſe of their ſoules, and never eate with pleaſure*, ſcarce ſeeing a good day; and if this had beene thy caſe, yet this is infinite mercy. Even whatſoever is on this ſide Hell, is mercy

Eccl. 5. 17.

Iob 21. 25

Lam. 3. 22. say they in the worst estate the Church was ever on earth, *It is thy* [*mercies*,] not *mercy* onely, but multitude of mercies are shewne us, *that we are not consumed, because his mercies are renewed every morning.* If at the brink of hell, and not in, it is mercy. But hath he not all this while *filled thy heart with food and gladnesse*, as the Apostle speakes, *Acts* 14.17? It were infinite to go over the particular kindes of commō cōforts, which God vouchsafes men here: not half the riches of his goodnes is yet told: It would require an age to make an Inventory of them. Hast thou a house in the world to hide thy head in, and keepe thee

Lam. 3.22.

Act. 14.17

from injuries of the weather? (which was more than Chriſt had) God hee is thy *Landlord*, (though it may bee thou payeſt him no rent;) *hee* it is that *builds the houſe*, *Pſal.* 127.1. Haſt a bed to lye upon? he *makes* it, eſpecially *in thy ſickneſſe*, *Pſal.* 41.3. Haſt thou *ſleepe* (which is the nurſe of nature, the parentheſis of all thy cares and griefes,) hee rocks thee aſleepe every night; and as he gives thee a houſe, ſo he gives thee *reſt*, *Pſal.* 127.2. It is God keeps off thoſe gnats of diſtracting cares, and griefes, and thoughts, and terrors of conſcience, would buzze about a man, and keepe one continually waking. And when thou ſleepeſt, *is thy ſleepe*

Pſal. 41.3.

Pſa. 127.2.

pleaſant

pleaſant to thee? GOD *makes it* ſo, *Ier.*31.26. Haſt thou cloathes to cover thy nakedneſſe? reade old *Iacobs* Indentures, *Gen.* 28. 20. and thou ſhalt ſee by them whoſe finding they are at; if *Thou wilt give me rayment*, that is one of his conditions mentioned. Yea, doe thy cloathes *keepe thee warme?* even this is attributed to him, *Iob* thirty ſeven, verſe ſeventeene. Hee fills thee, feeds thee, *ſpreads thy table*, ſerves thee, *fills thy cup*, as *David* deſcribes his goodneſſe, *Pſal.* 23. 5. and gives thee thy *meat in due ſeaſon*; and hath not failed thee a meales meat, but thou haſt had it at thy *appointed time*, as *Iob* ſpeakes.

Ier.31.26

Gen.28.20

Iob.37.17

And haſt thou health? which is the ſalt to all theſe bleſſings, (without which thou wouldſt ſay, *thou hadſt no pleaſure in them*) He is the *God of thy health*, and keepes off diſeaſes. *Exod.* 15. 26. *I will put none of thoſe diſeaſes on thee; I am the Lord who healeth thee*; that is, preſerves thee from them which elſe would ſeize on thee. And theſe mercies he vouchſafeth unto you that are the pooreſt, and *loades you with theſe* and the like *benefits every day*.

Exod. 15. 26.

Pſa. 68. 19

But haſt thou *Riches* added to theſe, and abundance? *The bleſſing of God maketh rich*, *Prov.* 10. 22. Though thou hadſt them by birth, yet hee made thoſe friends, and

and parents of thine, but feoffees in truſt for thee: they were no more: it was God who bequeathed them, *Eccleſ.* 2. laſt. Or whether thou haſt got them ſince by thine owne induſtry, it is he *gives thee power to get wealth*, *Deut.* 8. 18. *Prov.* 12. 24. and out of *a ſmall eſtate maketh men great*, *Iob* 8. 7. It is hee by his providence hath ſtopt the ſecret iſſues and draynes of expence, at which other mens eſtates run out; hath ſtopt *that hole in the bottome of the bag*, as the Prophet ſpeakes. And with theſe riches, hath he given *thee a heart to uſe them?* This, as it is a *farther mercy*, *Eccleſ.* 5. 19. and Chap. 6. 2. ſo alſo from

Deut.8.18.

him, as it is noted there.

Or haſt thou *credit* (which is bettet than riches: ſo
Prov. 22. 1. ſayes *Solomon*, *Prov.* 22. 1.) it is God who gives it, not thy wiſedome, parts, or worth: *Eccleſ.* 9. 11. *favour is not alwaies to men of skill*: that is, not acceptatiõ of what they doe, without a farther bleſſing from God. Therefore beſides the *gift of wiſdome*, he gave a further promiſe of *honour* alſo unto *Solomon*, 2 *Chron.* 1. 11. It is God who faſhions mens opinions. The Apoſtle prayes to God *his ſervice* might *bee accepted of the Saints*, though no ſervice was like to bee more acceptable, for it was the gathering and bringing in of almes and reliefe to them.

them. It is hee rules mens tongues, bids men bleſſe, as well as *he bade Shimei curſe:* and hee hath kept thee from ſuch groſſe ſinnes, which, as flyes, would have *putrifyed the oyntment of thy good name*, who alſo conceales thoſe thou haſt committed, and *hides thee from the ſtrife of tongues*, *Iob* 5.21. Iob 5.21.

Haſt thou friends, or doe any love thee? (wherein much of the comfort of our lives conſiſts, and therefore *David* ſayes of *Ionathan*, 2 *Sam.*1.26. *Thou wert pleaſant to mee*) it is God who gives favour in mens eyes: So hee did *Ioſeph*, *Gen.* 39. 21. If any man or creature doth thee a kindneſſe, hee toucheth their hearts, (as 2 Sa.1.26.

(as it is ſaid of the men who clave to *Saul*) and viſits for thee; He made the *Egyptians* beyond all reaſon the *Iſraelites friends*, gave them favour in their eyes, as the text tels us. And hence, *Gen.* 33. 10. *Iacob* ſayes, *He ſaw the face of God*, in reconciled *Eſaus* face; for Gods favour appeared in his looke. Hee put you into your callings, rankes, and ſtations, gives you all your skill, ſucceſſe in them; The meaneſt of trades, to *ſow*, and *plough*, and *threſh*, they are *from the Lord*, *who is wonderfull in working*, (*Eſay* 28. from the three and twenty to the end) even as well as the skill of the moſt curious Ingraver, Limbner, or Embroyderer as

(as of *Bezaleel*) the Scripture sayes, God was his Master, taught him. Hast thou enlarged parts and gifts for higher imployments? it is not thy *birth*, or *age* hath acquired them unto thee: *Iob* 32. 8, 9. *Great men are not alwayes wise*, therefore it goes not by birth; *nor have the aged alwayes understanding*, it goes not onely by experience; but *it is the inspiratiõ of the Almighty*. And hast thou a calling answerable to thy parts, to be a Scholer, and have thy minde enriched and ennobled with the best and choisest jewel the world hath, wisdome and knowledge; whereby the minde is elevated as much above other mens, as they are above beasts? Iob 32.8,9

beasts? GOD hath been thy great *Tutor*, *The mind of man is Gods Candle*, and hee maketh wiser than a mans teachers, as hee did *Moses* in Egyptian learning, *Daniel*, *David*.

To conclude, hast thou comfort in all these? in riches, learning, credit, wife, children, meat, drinke, &c. Hee puts in all the sugar, delight and pleasure that especially depends on him; even to fashion the heart to all these. As ayre lights not without the Sunne, nor wood heats not without fire; so neither doth thy conditiõ comfort thee without God. And therfore it is said, Acts 14.17. *He filled their hearts, as with food*, so, *with gladnesse*.

Acts 14. 17.

And

And beſides all theſe, conſider the many peculiar paſſages and turnings of his providence towards thee for thy good; the working of things together, ever and anon to doe thee a good turne; the packing and plotting all for thee, better than thou couldſt have plotted for thy ſelfe; as thy reliefe in many ſtreights, ſucceſſe in many buſineſſes; Hee *workes all our workes in us and for us*, as *Eſay* ſpeakes, *Eſay* 26. hath hee not taken ſuch ſpeciall care and providence of thee, as if hee had regarded no man elſe in the world?

And now when thou haſt conſidered all, bethinke thy ſelfe withall a little of

of thy dealings towards him: what have beene the effects and fruits of all his goodneſſe? hold up thy head man, looke God in the face. It is well yet, that ſhame begins to cover thee. How hath that his patience and long-ſuffering, vouchſafing thee ſpace to repent, wrought with thee? how nigh to repentance hath it brought thee? Such is the perverſeneſſe of mans nature, as *Solomon* tels us, *Eccleſ.* 8. 11. that *becauſe ſentence againſt an evill worke is not preſently executed, therefore the hearts of the ſonnes of men are fully ſet to doe evill*: Becauſe God defers puniſhing, they defer repenting; thou thinkeſt to ſpend the moſt precious

Eccl.8.11.

cious of thy time and ſtrength in ſinning, and give God the dregs, the bottome, the laſt ſands, thy dotage, which thy very ſelfe and friends are weary of; and all theſe bleſſings and comforts which God hath vouchſafed thee, how haſt thou uſed them againſt him? This oyle which ſhould have been fuell to thy thankfulneſſe, hath increaſed the fire of thy luſts, and thy *luſts have conſumed them all, Iames* 4. The riches he hath given, thou haſt made Idols of, and ſacrificed thy deareſt, morning, daily thoughts and affections unto, as God complaines, *Ezek.* 16. from the 15. and ſo on: [His meate] (as at the 29. ver. he calls it) thou ſacri-

ſacrificedſt to *thy belly, which thou haſt made* thy God; thy ſtrength to women; the wealth hee hath given you, you have made uſe of, but to live at a high rate of ſinning, and to procure the ſweeteſt bits, the daintieſt and moſt coſtly ſinnes; The edge of that ſword of power GOD hath put into thy hand, thou haſt turned againſt him and his, haply both his Children and Miniſters; ſo that God, by giving thee all theſe, hath but made thee more able to offend him, and hath ſtrengthened an enemy; and by ſparing thee thus long, hath but made thee more bold to do it; all his mercies have but fortified thy heart againſt him; *Doe ye requite the*

the Lord thus, ye fooliſh people and unkinde? as *Moſes* expoſtulates the caſe, *Deut.32.6.* as Chriſt ſaid to the Iews, *For which of all my good works doe yee ſtone mee?* So ſay I to you, for which of all his mercies is it, ye ſinne againſt him? what, to fight againſt him with his owne weapons? to betray all he gives you into the devils, his enemies hands? *What iniquity did you ever finde in him*, thus to deale? God will one day thus expoſtulate his cauſe with you, and *heape coales of fire upon all your heads*, (if that you turne not) becauſe you have *rendred him evill for good*: and all theſe mercies thus abuſed, will bee as ſo many coales to make Deut.32.6.

make hell-fire the hotter. And to reaſon this point yet further with you out of the Text, and what arguments it will afford to worke upon you.

Conſider, firſt, what it is thou doeſt. Whileſt thus thou goeſt on, thou art a *Deſpiſer of the Riches of his goodneſſe:* that which is oppoſite to goodneſſe, muſt needs be tranſcendently evil. What, *art thou evill, becauſe God is good?* and ſo much the more evill, by how much the more he is good? ſurely there muſt needs bee an unexhauſted treaſure of wickedneſſe in thee, which will alſo cauſe in the end a treaſure of wrath in him. What, and ſin againſt mercy, patience,

ence, long-ſuffering, added to goodneſſe: of all attributes, as the richeſt ſo the moſt glorious; for it is that he glories in: in the abuſing of which, therefore he thinks himſelfe moſt debaſed: of all attributes the tendereſt: what, kick againſt *his bowels?* ſo are his mercies called: canſt hit him no where elſe but there? to deſpiſe a mans wiſdome, power, learning, is not ſo much as to deſpiſe his love; what canſt thou imagine wil become of thee, when thou commeſt to dye? what is it thou wilt then come to plead and cry for? O mercy, mercy; why wretch that thou art, it is mercy thou haſt ſinned againſt. Riches of mercy and patience

patience abuſed, turnes into fury. I may allude to that ſpeech, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. *If a man ſinne againſt his brother, the Iudge ſhall judge him; but if againſt* GOD, *who ſhall plead for him?* So hadſt thou ſinned againſt any other attribute, Mercy might have pleaded for thee; but if againſt Mercy it ſelfe, who ſhall?

Well, if thou goeſt on thus to doe ſo ſtill; thou haſt a *hard heart*; it argues the greateſt hardneſſe of all other; that is the ſecond. You uſe not (however it comes to paſſe) to deale thus with the worſt of men, ſinners like to your ſelves; but to them that love you, you

you tender love again, *Luk 6.* 33. and will you deale ſo with God? *Is it a ſmall thing to weary men, but you muſt weary God alſo?* ſayes *Eſay*, 7.13. Eſay 7.13. Hee thought it infinitelie leſſe to abuſe men than God; but you carry your ſelves as men, to men, but as devills towards God; herein yee have not the hearts of men in you; not principles of common humanity, whereby yee differ from beaſts; The *cords of love are called the cords of a man, Hoſ.* 11.6. Hoſ. 11.6. the ſpirit of man breakes, melts under kindneſſe; beaſts indeed yee uſe to prick with goads, but the cords of a man are the cords of love; no principle being more deepely engraven in mens hearts,

hearts, than this, *to doe good to thoſe who doe good to you,* Mat.5.46. *Mat.* 5.46. Nay, would ye had herein yet the hearts of beaſts; *The Oxe knowes his owner, the Aſſe his maſters cribb, but my people have rebelled againſt me.* A ſinne ſo much againſt nature, that he calls upon thoſe creatures, who have no more than meere nature in them, viz. Eſay 1. *the heavens to ſtand aſtoniſht at it.* But as nature elevated by grace, riſeth higher than it ſelfe; ſo being poyſoned with ſin, it is caſt below it ſelfe; ſinnes againſt it ſelfe, and the principles which are begotten in and with it ſelfe; if it were not ſo, how were it poſſible thou ſhouldeſt *hate him*, who never did thee hurt?

hurt? and goe on to wound him, who weepeth over thee? and despise that in him most, which seekes to save thee? and load him with sins, *Amos* 2. 13. who loades thee daily with his mercies? *Psal.* 68. 19.

Amo. 2. 13

Psa. 68. 19.

There is a third consideration the text suggests, to shew the fearefulnesse of thy sin in this respect; and that is, that thou goest on every minute sinning & in impenitency, by despising his goodnesse, to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath; to sin against mercy, of all other increaseth wrath; thou must pay treasures, for treasures spent. As thou lavishly spendest riches of mercy, so God will recover riches

of glory out of thee : God will not lose by thee, but will reckon with thee in wrath for *every offer* of patience spent; for every sand of long-suffering that runs out, he drops in a drop of wrath into his Vials, and it will prove a treasure, such a treasure as shall bring in an eternall revenue of Glory unto God, of all his glory lost, and riches spent, with advantage; such a treasure, as will aske an eternity of time to be spent upon thee, and yet bee never emptied or made lesse; and the longer thou goest on, the greater heap it will swell unto. And dost thou know and consider how fast this treasure fils? and how much the longer thou

thou goeſt on to adde to it, ſtill the more thou addeſt, ſtill the laſt yeare more than all the yeares before? every minutes impenitency adding to this heap and ſumme, as new figures added in a ſumme uſe to doe; the firſt is but one, the ſecond makes it ten, the third an hundred, the fourth a thouſand, and what a ſumme will this grow to?

Ay but thou wilt ſay, Tuſh, I am in proſperity, in health, wealth, and eaſe, and to day ſhall be as to morrow, and much more abundant, *Eſay* 56. 12. Well, but fourthly, conſider out of the text, that there will come a day at laſt, the morrow whereof will bee a *day of*

wrath: It is treaſuring up now, but it is not brought forth till the day of wrath, till which day thou maiſt goe on and proſper, as *Iob* giving us the reaſon why wicked men proſper here, ſayes, Chap. 21. They are *reſerved to the day of wraths*, in the plurall, becauſe treaſures are laid up againſt then; thou art yet ſpared, becauſe thy ſins are not yet full, and that Treaſure is not full, as the ſinnes of the *Amorites* were not; and all this thy preſent proſperity fits thee but for hell. So *Rom.* 9. 22. they are ſaid to bee veſſels *fitted for deſtruction*, by long-ſuffering. And ſo *Nahum* tels us, they are but as *ſtubble* laid out in the Sunne a dry-

ing,

ing, till it bee *fully dry*, *Nahum* 1. 10. that it may burne the better; and like grapes that are let to hang in the Sunshine till they be ripe, *Revel.* 15. 16. and so thou for the *winepresse of Gods wrath.*

But thy senseleſſe heart may hap to say, I see no such thing, and these are but threats, I thinke so; therefore it is said in the Text, that it is a *Treasure*; which, as Treasures use to be, is hid till that day comes, and then *revealed*, as the words have it. For though thou seest not this day a comming, yet God, who sits in heaven, sees thy day a comming, as *David* sayes, *Psalme* 37. 13. who is there-

fore ſaid to ſee it, becauſe himſelfe ſees it not; and it is a comming faſter than thou art aware of it, 2 *Pet.* 2. 3. *Damnation ſlumbereth not*, though thou dreameſt not of it; *lingreth not*: as an hue and cry, it is ſent out, and is on its courſe, and will in the end overtake thee, and that when thou leaſt thinkeſt of it, *as a theefe in the night*, when thou art aſleepe, yet dreameſt not of it, 2 *Theſ.* 5. when thou art leaſt prepared for it, as in the olde world, when they were eating and drinking: as God watcheth when his childe is at the beſt and ripeſt, and then takes him; ſo hee will watch thee to take

2 Pet. 2. 3.

2 Theſ. 5.

take thee for thy neglect, at thy worſt, and give thee haply no time to prepare; they go downe to hell in a moment, *Pſal.* 73. 9.

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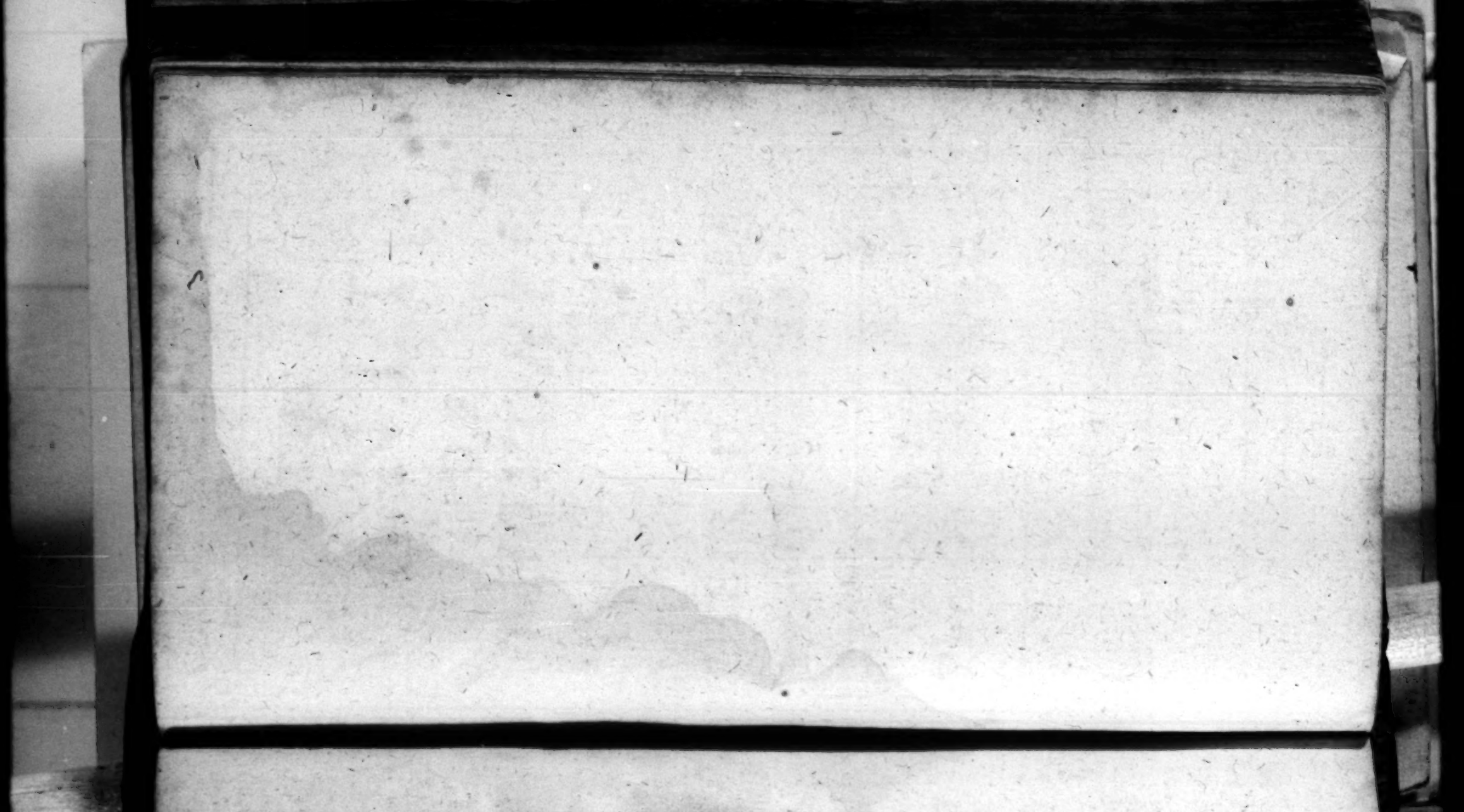
*

FINIS.

IMPRIMATUR;

THO: WILKES.

R. P. Epº: Lond.

Cap. Domest.